THE NATION

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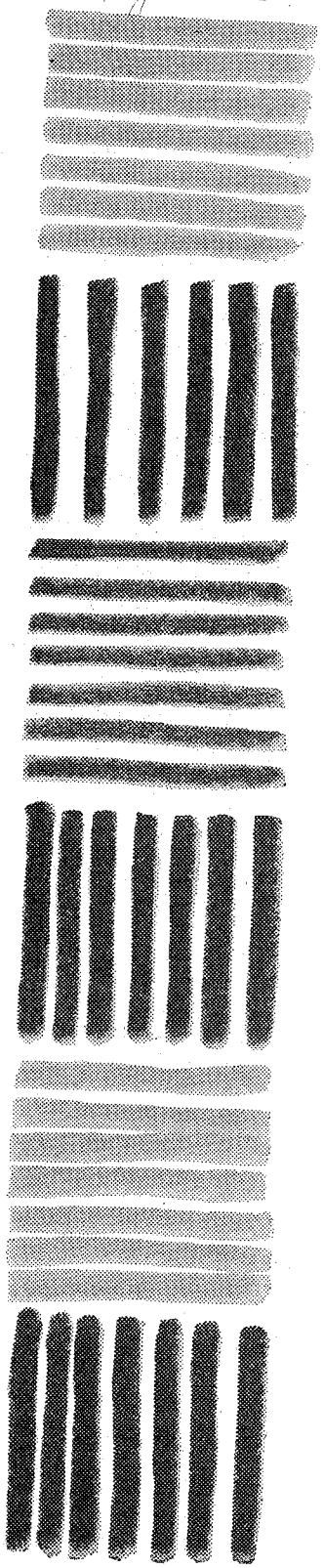

Misadventure in Vietnam:

The Mix of Fact and Myth
John Gange

'The Only War We've Got'
Daniel F. Ford

The New Ideology
GOLDWATERISM
Carey McWilliams

'The Bourgeois Poet'
A Review by WEBSTER SCHOTT

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LETTERS

Cabinet in the closet

Washington, D.C.

Dear Sirs: One of the most talked about, but least reported, subjects today seems to be the make-up of the Goldwater cabinet, yet I haven't seen any articles about the Senator's ideas in this regard. Here are the most frequently heard selections:

State: William Knowland, former Senator from Formosa.

Treasury: George Humphrey, for keeping the general out of the convention.

Defense: Sen. Strom Thurmond, reserve unit leader or, if he declines, former Gen. Edwin Walker.

Attorney General: J. Edgar Hoover or, if he declines, Governor George Wallace for dropping out of the race.

Postmaster General: GOP committee chairman Dean Burch of course.

Interior: H. L. Hunt, the Texas oil man who finally got Interior operating again.

Agriculture: Ezra Taft Benson, who held the job under Eisenhower.

Commerce: Rep. Bruce Alger of Dallas.

Labor: Rep. Steve Derounian of New York.

Health, Education and Welfare: Joseph Mitchell, former city manager of Newburgh, N.Y.

CIA: John McCone, the present chairman.

Atomic Energy Commission: John Rousselot, former California Congressman.

Housing and Home Finance: Edgar Hiestand, former California Congressman.

For USIA there seems to be considerable disagreement as to whether the job should go to William F. Buckley, the editor, or Robert Welch, former candy maker, while it's more likely that the information agency would be discontinued as an unnecessary waste of money. *George Spencer*

Massive retaliation

Glenside, Pa.

Dear Sirs: Senator Kenneth Keating has proposed that the more affluent Americans "adopt" an impoverished member of the human family "by mail." This letter-carrier compassion is hardly adequate. . . . What we need is a Reverse Peace Corps. However much we must respect the idealism of the Peace Corpsmen, the brute fact is that it is an intellectual rather than an institutional triumph. The peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America will not modernize fast enough at the present rate of support they are receiving from the advanced countries. Instead of sending 5,000 students abroad, we need to invite 20 million non-Americans into our households. . . . Let each of us with more than we need to eat, wear and be sheltered invite an African, Asian or Latin American into our homes, not our mailboxes. Let us adopt such a family member and put him through high school and college. . . .

Sure it sounds crazy . . . but only a massive retaliation of charity can undo the moral paralysis of the brinkmanship of the past decade. An impossible ideal is what we need to unmire us from the trivialities of Miami Beach, Las Vegas and Disneyland. . . .
Patrick D. Hazard

Lantern

Fort Myers, Fla.

Dear Sirs: As an American I am filled with pride at the service you steadily perform, a service like unto that of the Watchman Letters (Galsworthy?) —only your lantern ignites a train of delayed action (in *Look,* or *The Reporter,* or whatever) that is an exhilarating spectacle. I hope the effects of "Defeat in Harlem" (July 27) will not be too long delayed. *Sarah Vinke*

Funds for justice

San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Sirs: When you put a man in prison, another man must guard him. Thus two men have lost their freedom. All over this country the Negro has been imprisoned. The white man has been his jailer. And so all of us, black and white, are bound.

Some of us have demonstrated against this bondage. Here in San Francisco some 500 people have been and are being tried in court for sitting-in at the Sheraton-Palace Hotel and at the Cadillac agency. We were demonstrating for fair hiring practices and for more jobs for Negroes. We were charged variously with disturbing the peace, unlawful assembly, failure to disperse and trespassing.

Of the cases which have so far come to trial, there have been some acquittals, some hung juries and some convictions. Defendants have received harsh and unjust sentences; sentences range from five to seventy days in jail, with fines as high as $200, to a sentence of nine months in jail for Dr. Thomas N. Burbridge, the chairman of the local chapter of NAACP. Persons who have committed misdemeanors not connected with civil rights invariably receive sentences far less harsh, and only in the rarest instances are jail sentences imposed. . . .

I have been tried and received a thirty-day jail sentence plus a fine of $110. Special plea was made in my case because I have young children. The judge did not see fit to lighten my sentence or show mercy.

The convictions are being appealed to a higher court and we are out on bail. Although our attorneys have defended us without remuneration, we greatly need money to pay the cost of appeals, fines and bail-bond fees.

Please send your contributions to: Funds for Justice, P.O. Box 77051, San Francisco, Calif. *Frances Bell*

THE NATION

Monday, August 24, 1964
Volume 199, No. 4

In this issue

EDITORIALS
61

ARTICLES

Misadventure in Vietnam:

63 The Mix of Fact and Myth
John Gange

66 "The Only War We've Got"
Daniel F. Ford

68 Goldwaterism:
The New Ideology
Carey McWilliams

72 Baruch and His Legend
Albert A. Blum

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

74 Leaves of Glass
Webster Schott

76 Art
Max Kozloff

79 Films
Grandin Conover

Crossword Puzzle (opp. 80)
Frank W. Lewis

George G. Kirstein, Publisher
Carey McWilliams, Editor
Robert Hatch, Managing Editor
Elizabeth Sutherland, Books and the Arts
Marion Hess, Copy Editor
Grandin Conover, Assistant Editor
Harold Clurman, Theatre
Max Kozloff, Art
Benjamin Boretz, Music
Carl Dreher, Science
Denise Levertov, Poetry
Alexander Werth, Europe
Mary Simon, Advertising Manager

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Shortening the Fuse

Democrats are gleeful, Republicans morose, at the escalation of the war in Vietnam. For the time being, the President has wrested the Vietnam issue from Senator Goldwater's grip. But we know only too well that escalation leads to escalation — on both sides. The excessive retaliatory action the President saw fit to order brings us closer to the brink of World War III. Therefore, aside from the domestic political aspect, it is important to know what happened. Secretary McNamara's reply to the question of why the *Maddox* was attacked in the first place ("I can offer no explanation") calls for a review of the preceding events.

For the last eighteen months American naval vessels and aircraft have conducted irregular patrols of the Gulf of Tonkin, an inland sea of crucial strategic importance to North Vietnam, and of more than peripheral interest to Red China. U. S. vessels have not gone inside the 3-mile territorial limit, but they have repeatedly and deliberately crossed the 12-mile limit which both North Vietnam and China claim as the boundary. At times these incursions have coincided with operations of the South Vietnamese navy (to be distinguished from the South Vietnamese "black pajama" fleet of some 500 wooden junks, some dieselized, which patrol the coast of South Vietnam and occasionally venture north of the 17th parallel). But the junks are probably of less concern to the North Vietnamese than the South Vietnamese navy proper, which is equipped with PT boats, destroyer escorts and other fast attack craft by the U. S. These vessels engage in forays against North Vietnam, nor are they alone. The U. S. Navy has a special force known as SEAL which is the counterpart of the Army's special forces. SEAL personnel are trained to engage in all sorts of surreptitious intelligence and harassing operations, and in the Vietnam theatre they have not been idle.

Besides South Vietnamese and American naval operations, joint U. S.-South Vietnamese air operations had become a regular feature of the war, as disclosed by *Aviation Week* (Apr. 6) and more recently by the South Vietnamese themselves. On top of all this, the shaky Premier-General Nguyen Khanh was screaming "To the North! To the North!" At this juncture, when the North Vietnamese had some cause to be jittery, the South Vietnamese navy conducted an operation against two small islands off the North Vietnamese coast, one about 3 miles, the other about 8. This raid was carried out with the full knowledge of American personnel in Saigon. The commander of the *Maddox* may or may not have been informed — but the *Maddox* was there.

According to one estimate, she was 20 miles offshore, and therefore technically on the high seas. But she was close enough, as Senator Morse pointed out, to give rise to the North Vietnamese's impression of a cause-and-effect relation between her presence and the attack on their islands.

Since 1943, it has been basic naval doctrine that PT boats are no match for destroyers. John Allan May, a former PT boat officer, writes in *The Christian Science Monitor*: "It seems probable . . . that the North Vietnamese boat commanders felt that they had to attack." The President then gave public orders, if the attack was repeated, to shoot to kill — as if there had been any hesitancy the first time.

The admirals were not reluctant. The North Vietnamese deny that there was a second attack, but all reports from the U. S. side agree that there was a night battle much more severe than the first engagement. Again the Seventh Fleet was victorious. The six North Vietnamese PT boats suffered all the casualties, the U. S. vessels none. Nevertheless the President sent the two aircraft carriers with their destroyer screen into action. Sixty-four sorties were flown. Presumably the North Vietnamese learned that *kamikaze*-type attacks by PT boats are not a rewarding tactic.

Fired on, the *Maddox* had to fire back. U. S. actions in the second engagement are also defensible. But that should have been the end of the matter, with perhaps a U. S. complaint to the UN as a sequel. Instead, the President, at the inception of the electoral campaign, improved the occasion with a major retaliatory action. He laid all the blame on the North Vietnamese and took no account of the fact that there had been prior South Vietnamese and American provocation to match any that we suffered. In his unctuous speech at Syracuse, *Newsweek* says he "was never more than a few feet away from the Secret Service agent who carried the ever-present little black bag with the nuclear firing codes." Garbed in cap and gown, he dropped the policy of restraint and shortened the fuse of the nuclear holocaust.

Goldwater's Diggins

Enough is now known about Senator Goldwater's campaign funds to pinpoint the sources of his support. *Business Week* provides this revealing quote from Daniel Gainey, the Minneapolis jewelry maker who headed the pre-convention drive: "The money we're getting is not moldy. It's domestic, hard-earned, shiny money that's been earned by men who are still in the saddle." A prime source are the owner-operators of medium-sized businesses in the $10 million and up bracket — men who have built their own enterprises. "And there are more of these guys than there are industrial and banking giants in the East." Shown a list of the thirteen or fourteen largest family donors to Republican campaigns of the past, a Goldwater spokesman could identify only one — the Pews of Philadelphia (Sun Oil) — as contributors. There is,

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however, one politically deviant du Pont — Lammot du Pont Copeland, Jr., son of the president of du Pont. According to *National Observer*, the Goldwater campaign is "smoking out new money . . . the days of Eastern dominance in Republican finance are over, this time, anyway . . . the Goldwater candidacy is forcing a new alignment of financial power in politics." Regionally, most of the money has come from the South (Roger Milliken, multimillionaire president of Deering Milliken, Inc., an early and heavy contributor); Texas (Douglas Sharp, of Houston, former Secretary of the Air Force, Richard J. Kleberg, Jr., of King Ranch, Peter O'Donnell, the Dallas investment broker, J. D. Stetson Coleman of the Los Angeles Angels and the Rams, whose wife is owner of Fannie May Candy Shops, Inc.); and Southern California (the familiar "fat cats" of the Right: Henry Salvatori, of Western Geophysical Company, Pat Frawley of Eversharp-Technicolor, Walter Knott of Knott's Berry Farm, and others). Key Midwest financial figures include: George Humphrey, Arthur Summerfield, R. Douglas Stuart of Chicago (Quaker Oats), Loren Berry, of Dayton, Wayne Hood and the Maytag people. The new power of the West is conspicuous. Henry Salvatori, who heads up his own "anti-Communist" crusade, is quoted as saying: "The Eastern people have seen conclusively we don't have to go to them, *hat in hand, and have them tell us what to do.*" But now, as the big campaign gets under way, Ralph Cordiner, retired chairman of General Electric, has been named chairman of the Republican National Fianancial Committee, and the drive for Eastern "big money" is under way. Of the estimated $12.8 million needed for the big push, however, 40 per cent will come from the South. Money pitches are being deliberately beamed at the middle-income groups. Some 300,000 individuals have contributed to the campaign; in fact, nearly 40 per cent of the pre-convention total came from gifts of $10 or less. The big-money Texas oil tycoons would probably like to contribute but are well aware of what might happen to their oil depletion allowances if they did — not to mention what might happen to oil import quotas. To date, then, the chief Goldwater support has come from "the missile crescent" and the Midwest, with a strong emphasis on the "new money crowd," i. e., the new "achievement-oriented" middle class. This late intelligence affords striking confirmation of our own analysis of Goldwater's chief sources of support (see article page 68). In the meantime, of course, the President is hobnobbing with Henry Ford, Henry Luce, John Hay Whitney, David Rockefeller and other Establishment figures and, at the same time, making it "chic" to be a Democrat in the suburbs.

SUMMER SCHEDULE

The next issue of *The Nation* will appear on Sept. 7, after which we resume normal weekly publication.

The Fayette Fraud

"This election is as crooked as two left shoes," is the way one Negro leader characterized the election in Fayette County, Tenn. (see "Students Get the Vote Out" by R. V. Denenberg, *The Nation*, Aug. 10). His feelings were shared by the rest of the 17,000 Negroes in the county, many of whom shook their heads in somber disbelief when they heard that L. T. Redfearn had been beaten by incumbent Sheriff C. E. Pattat by a vote of 3,550 to 1,870. Poll watchers certified by Redfearn and Rev. June Dowdy, who lost his race for tax assessor by about the same margin, were excluded from virtually all polling places. Many Negroes certified as poll watchers for Rep. Ross Bass, winner of the Democratic Senatorial nomination, were also turned away. Even those Bass poll watchers who were allowed to stay, however, were not permitted to watch the county election count being conducted in the next room. But the most damning evidence of fraud is the count taken by civil rights workers of the total number of voters who entered polling places during the day.

That figure, compiled by the Cornell Committee for Free and Fair elections in Fayette County, was considerably less than the total vote reported. FBI agents who were in the county on Election Day were told of the ejection of certified poll watchers, including those that Bass had certified, but refused to take action. Repeated appeals by Drew Pearson and others, in advance of the election, to enlist the aid of the Department of Justice fell on deaf ears. A federal judge in Memphis refused to issue a restraining order the day before the election on the ground that the district courts cannot act in a dispute over a local election. But the issue of fraud will be pressed all the same because of the refusal to permit Bass poll watchers at some polling places. Although the taste of defeat was bitter for the Cornell students and local Negroes, many of whom fought bravely for their rights, the lessons learned will not be soon forgotten. If the student effort in Fayette County achieved nothing else, it greatly strengthened Negro determination to "take part," which is what impelled them to challenge the white "courthouse gang" in the first place. And there is both comfort and encouragement for them in the smashing victory won by Ross Bass — and by Rep. Richard Bolling in Kansas City — both of whom voted for the Civil Rights Act.

Railroaded to Freedom

Nine distinguished men of faith have dealt a most embarrassing blow to the pride of Florida's state judicial system and, in doing so, have set a useful precedent for civil rights workers elsewhere in the South who find themselves confronted with antebellum justice.

The nine "freedom riding" ministers — among whom are several of New York's leading slum-ministry reformers, an envoy to the Vatican's ecumenical council, and a director of the National Council of

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Churches' migrant ministry in the West — were arrested in 1961 for unlawful assembly when they tested the Tallahassee airport restaurant.

For three years they fought their conviction but, because of a technical deficiency, they were never able to get their case out of the state courts and into the U. S. Supreme Court. Finally all legal avenues were closed to them until they actually went to jail, whence they could begin a new round of appeals through the state courts. So when Tallahassee, for spite, hailed them to leave their important work and return to begin a sixty-day sentence, they went.

At this point their attorney, Howard Dixon of the American Civil Liberties Union, took a radically candid approach to their problem. He asked a federal circuit court of appeals to give his clients either new bail or a writ of *habeas corpus*, arguing that "in six years we have never won a civil rights case on appeal in Florida courts," and that in race cases "appeals to them for justice are futile." He begged the federal panel to take jurisdiction.

And the federal jurists did. They gave the state courts three days within which to grant some relief to the ministers. Otherwise, the federal court would take over. ACLU attorneys claim this is a real precedent with promise, getting a federal court to take a case away from the state courts in midstream on an open-faced plea that the state courts simply don't dispense justice.

At this point, with the ministers clearly on the way to victory at last, Florida's capital city turned petty in a hilarious way. It reduced their sentences to time served (four days) and threw them *out* of jail—over their protests—thus blocking further efforts by the nine to clear themselves in federal court.

Certainly the clergymen cannot claim anything unusual about being jailed unconstitutionally, but they may be the first persons railroaded to freedom.

Misadventure in Vietnam

1. The Mix of Fact and Myth . . . . . John Gange

The weathered headstones in the old Protestant cemetery of Portuguese Macao tell of the misadventures of many Americans in the Gulf of Tonkin and the South China Sea. In the early years of our Republic, the Americans who died in this faraway area were sailors, Yankee traders, missionaries and visionary diplomats—like Edmund Roberts, who first sought treaties for the United States in Southeast Asia, journeying to Cochin China, Siam and Muscat in 1832. Today, the headlines toll the death of many Americans pursuing the political interests of the United States in Southeast Asia.

From small beginnings our interest in Southeast Asia swelled to include a colonial empire highlighted by our half century in the Philippines. The United States blundered into empire in 1898 by defeating the weak Spanish imperialists in the Battle of Manila Bay. Now we are fighting again in the Gulf of Tonkin and in the steaming jungles of old Indo-China. For many Americans today our deep involvement in Southeast Asia's civil wars is as inexplicable as was our plunge into empire in the Philippines. For fourteen years we have propped the French effort to keep Indo-China, or have underwritten the "democratic" regimes of such as Bao Dai, Ngo Dinh Diem and the subsequent military dictators. We have stumbled into "colonial" responsibilities without corresponding authority since the defeat of France by the Vietnamese in 1954.

The dilemma we faced in mid-1954 was very different in some respects from the dilemma President McKinley faced in 1898 when he was informed that all of the Philippine Islands were ours for the taking—and holding. In 1954, there was nothing ready for the taking in Indo-China—unless we were prepared to battle the well-armed, well-led and tough Vietnamese and almost certainly the colossus of Communist China. We nevertheless decided to try to hold South Vietnam against a Communist take-over.

In doing so we underestimated Communist power and the response of great numbers of the Vietnamese to Ho Chi Minh's leadership, plus the extent of Communist outside aid, especially from the Chinese. When Secretary Dulles went to the Geneva Conference of April, 1954, called to discuss Korea and dispose of the pieces of the broken French empire in Indo-China, reportedly he refused to look at the chief Communist Chinese delegate, Premier Chou En-lai. This news sparked one of Fletcher Knebel's best quips to the effect that the Republicans were an odd lot, for Senator Joseph R. McCarthy saw Communists where they did not exist, and Secretary Dulles couldn't see them where they did exist. And here is a large part of our trouble: the refusal to look at facts which we dislike and hope will go away.

It has taken the French, through the voice of General de Gaulle, to tell us that no settlement of any Asian problem is possible that doesn't take Communist China fully into account. The British recognized this fact in 1950 but they have not been so blunt in asserting its validity. Americans have not dealt with a strong, unified China since 1842, when the British forced the opening of several Chinese ports to Western trade with various related privileges. In 1844, we got our treaty with China, including trading rights and extraterritorial courts for our citizens in China. This period of wars with the West marked the end of a strong China for a hundred years. It is time we now adjusted ourselves to the fact of a new China. Is this hard to accept? Indeed it is, and for a long time

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we will no doubt fight this gross fact of our times. Eventually, it will have to be accepted and it must henceforth be included in the ingredients that shape our Asian policy.

In 1954, we chose not to join in the Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference on Indo-China of July 21, 1954. (The United States made a unilateral statement, however, accepting the armistice agreements.) All the other nations (U. K., France, USSR, People's Republic of China, Laos, Cambodia and the People's Republic of Vietnam [North Vietnam]) at this conference, except the State of Vietnam (South Vietnam), accepted the agreements drawn there. South Vietnam, with our backing, refused to carry out the provisions of the 1954 Geneva agreement for elections in North and South Vietnam to form one government and instead set its course against the intent of this agreement. South Vietnam refused to permit the elections, began its military build-up, and prepared for the inevitable war of Vietnamese against Vietnamese, with both sides drawing on outside aid to maintain the fight. From here on it is the old familiar story of who first violated the accords or the intent of the accords, etc., etc. The fact that we first refused to accept them puts both the U. S. and South Vietnam in a dubious role—in the objective light of history—a role our government has been diligent to gloss over. We refused to permit "free elections" in Vietnam because we were sure we would lose them.

When we found the 1954 Geneva agreements unacceptable to us, although acceptable to the other signatory nations, we had two broad alternatives open to us. One alternative was to reject the final conclusions of the conference, disregarding thereby the majority decision, and continue our own bilateral policy with South Vietnam. This we chose to do.

The second alternative was to seek a higher forum than the Geneva Conference nations. Resort to the United Nations through various possible approaches would have involved all who were concerned with peace and freedom, which we alleged were threatened in Indo-China. The UN supervised an election and a plebiscite on the restoration of the monarchy in war-torn Greece in 1946. The conditions were hardly worse in all Vietnam in 1954, or even 1956, when a general election was to be held in July of that year. To those who say that a UN-supervised election in Vietnam would not have been acceptable to North Vietnam and Communist China, one answer is that we never tried this course of action and hence we can't say what the response might have been. Instead, we pressed for a Southeast Asian military security pact, which Secretary Dulles had urged in 1954.

The Eisenhower administration had just swallowed the bitter pill of negotiating with Communist China and North Korea an armistice in the Korean War. The Republican campaign oratory of 1952 would have sounded hollow and mocking indeed if the Dullesian trumpets of "liberation from communism" had sounded another retreat on the "rollback" front. Some prominent Republicans had wanted our fighting forces to join the Indo-Chinese fray in early 1954, beside France, but the general in the Commander in Chief's chair had overruled that, as he had rejected any renewal of fighting in Korea above the 38th parallel. Nevertheless, Republican leaders knew from innumerable charges of their own what a powerful weapon the Democrats would have in our domestic politics if the Republican administration now "lost Indo-China." Ironically enough, as with mainland China allegedly "lost" by the Democrats, the United States never *had* Indo-China and couldn't have held it if we had tried. Therefore, another war in Asia was not a feasible political course for a U. S. administration, even one led by a five-star general.

Yet we did decide to try to "hold" at least part of Indo-China, namely, the new State of Vietnam below the 17th parallel. And so the newest phase of Western adventure in Indo-China began with that decision. We have been trying for ten years to prove it a sound one.

In retrospect the foundations for our 1954 decision appear to be part fact and part myth—a fairly common "mix" in foreign as well as domestic policy decisions. The facts were that (1) Southeast Asia was a recognized target of Communist subversion and possible take-over; (2) many of the native occupants of the Indo-Chinese peninsula wanted no part of a future regime that might be dominated by Communist-oriented leaders. For religious, economic and political reasons many feared the kind of society they would have if Ho Chi Minh and others of his strong Communist belief became the new rulers of this war-weary part of Asia. The foreign businessmen, rubber planters and mine operators also, of course, feared the consequences of a Communist regime.

Moreover, the United States had become so conspicuously identified with the French in their struggle against Ho Chi Minh, albeit in the name of defense against international communism, that no further action by us now would mean that we, as well as the French, had gone down to defeat in another sector of the "containment" periphery of militant anti-communism.

So much for three quite substantial facts: a strong Communist drive for Southeast Asia; internal Indo-Chinese anti-Communist opinion; and the posture, or "face," of the U. S. if no further efforts were made to "save" Indo-China.

On the side of the myths that entered into our policy calculations, directly or indirectly, there was first the one, still often expressed, that it was possible to "draw a line" beyond which there would not be tolerated any expansion of Communist control. This appealing myth evokes images of a resolute U. S. cavalry stand at the pass, or *"ils ne passerant"* at Verdun in World War I, or a more sophisticated but still quite naive "containment-of-communism" concept. Thinking of communism as an *ideology* ought to make people chary of expounding on "drawing a line" to stop the spread of ideas. Interestingly, history provides no example of appealing *ideas* having been impeded effectively in their spread and adoption because of lines drawn on political maps.

The second myth that we embraced was that military action would be an acceptable substitute for basic political and social action. Again the lessons of the bitter and frustrating American experience in Nicaragua, Haiti and Santo Domingo in the years between World Wars I and II were passed over or rejected, if ever remembered. Military force — if sufficient in amount and ruthless enough in di-

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rection — *can* suppress rebellions, but rarely has it produced the reforms of conditions which lead men to join the ranks of rebellion. We ventured to combine some economic and technical aid with military support, but the rationale for military measures has prevailed increasingly as our efforts in Indo-China have persisted. The creation of SEATO in 1954 epitomizes this futile faith in military power to solve the problems of disorder in politically inchoate states desperately in need of *social* reform.

The third myth that we followed was the "domino" theory of the inevitable loss of all of Asia and a vital threat to our own continental security if any additional part of Asia came under Communist control. This theory was the delight of Sen. William Knowland, who trumpeted it in the Senate and across the land as if it had the infallibility of Newton's law of gravity. Even President Kennedy repeated the arguments of the "domino" theory and few voices were raised to question its logic of inevitable, irresistible and sequential massive defeat once the first (additional) little domino fell against the bastions of our friends.

The domino theory overlooks the possibility of strong reaction by other nations at different points when they are confronted by new circumstances clearly threatening *their* security. The theory assumes that all powerful forces are on only one side, always moving *outward*, and it neglects the possibility of disruptive internal forces and counterforces moving against the presumed massive seismic wave set in motion by any little change of political status. It is a negative, fearful and mechanistic view of politics and man, but for those very reasons it finds countless advocates.

So we took some facts and added some myths and came up with a decision — many times reaffirmed — to deny all Southeast Asia to communism, with military aid, and we created SEATO to do the job for us. Ten years later this queasy foundation of fact and myth finds us mired very deeply and sinking in more and more. After expending many billions of dollars and sacrificing hundreds of lives in combat or related services, after twistings and turnings of CIA undercover operations, with resulting changes of leaders in some of the states, there is still no end in sight.

What could we have done that we didn't do? If it had been possible for the Republicans to have done otherwise — or for the Democrats to have altered that policy after they took over in 1961 — one would like to think that they would surely have done so. The losses of American lives, the outpouring of many billions of taxpayers' dollars and the strains on our friendship with many other nations which have not seen the issues as we have seen them, would not normally be called assets to any political party seeking voter support. And so the American people have been told over and over that there were — and still are — no other alternatives but to stand on the 17th parallel (or well south of it) and fight the devils (allegedly all from the north) in the ancient battlegrounds of Indo-China. What we have done is intervene in a third civil war in Asia; China and Korea being the other two very costly interventions.

Until recently, too, we have lacked critical voices which, while not acting as "the devil's advocate," would at least ask if we are *sure* that what we are attempting is the only possible alternative acceptable to our people. Like McKinley and the Philippines, the vast majority of the American people in 1954 had only the vaguest notion of where Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam were — and they cared less. Do they even now believe these areas so vital to their welfare that very extensive and long-term involvement is all that we can consider?

In due time, probably later than would have been an optimum time for us, we will be forced to face the "unthinkable" possibility of the neutralization of all of the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Secretary of State Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara repeatedly say that no thought is being given to this alternative to our present massive military aid-*cum*-cheers-for-Khanh as our approach to the problem. The McNamara shuttle to Saigon carries threadbare calls for "greater resolve" and warnings of "an unforseeable end to the effort," and then the familiar and unconvincing reports of "gratifying progress" and "encouraging developments" on the Westbound run back to Washington. In the meantime, the Vietcong strike villages and cities at will in South Vietnam and simultaneously detail spare forces to push their campaign in Laos. Recruits and military equipment are picked up in abundance from the South Vietnamese civilian and military forces.

"Why are we involved in Southeast Asia?" "Where do we go for the next ten years?" These are the questions that beg and receive no clear answers, other than "Carry on! What was valid in 1954 is still valid in 1964" although the Asian world has changed greatly since then. At some point — and soon perhaps — we must face up to:

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(1) our dubious legal position in South Vietnam, with our shooting and destroying of military forces under the thin deceit of being "advisers"; (2) the soundness of our continuing passivity toward a strong role for the UN in Southeast Asian strife, while at the same time we have pressed for UN action in the internecine fighting of the Congo, Cyprus and the Middle East; (3) a new look at neutralization of "border" areas between East and West in Asia and the established examples, both satisfactory and unsatisfactory, of neutralization in Europe and elsewhere; (4) a hard review of all our interests in Asia, eventually in conference with Communist China; and (5) abandoning the shibboleth of containing communism along artificial latitudes or longitudes. The truth is that the ideological appeal of Marxist doctrine and the reforms that communism often has espoused effectively appeal to many people around the world; and the spread of these ideas will not be stopped by military fiat. Nor will it help at all to continue the repeated plaintive lament of Secretary Rusk that there would be peace in Indo-China if only the North Vietnamese and the Chinese would leave their neighbors alone. If all countries would leave their neighbors alone, it would be a very different world, but it is not realistic to expect this change in our times. To expand the war would assure only another Korea or worse, with all the possibilities of a nuclear war.

Will the new year or the post-election period see us re-examine our decade of "active defense" in Southeast Asia's Indo-Chinese peninsula? Perhaps not; it has become a habit to argue as we have for so long. Apparently only a Senator Wayne Morse can change his mind as fully as the circumstances require and still retain his following. Politics doesn't stop at the water's edge, but rather it governs all we do. Only a statesman above politics can change our course now. Events in Indo-China may not wait for our politicians to clear the November election hurdle before they can "lead" our discontented people to a new and more realistic settlement in Southeast Asia, and extricate us from a misadventure born of good motives based on some faulty calculations and expectations.

2. 'The Only War We've Got' . . . Daniel F. Ford

Saigon, Vietnam

You hear the phrase everywhere. A young Special Forces captain, fresh from Okinawa, declares: "All I want from Vietnam is the CIB" (the combat infantryman's badge, a long-rifle on a blue field with a silver wreath behind it). "Hell, man, it's the only war we've got." And an earnest major in corps headquarters says: "You'll meet the bravest and best soldiers in the U.S. Army right here. This is the only war we've got, and I'd rotate the whole Army through here if I could. As it is, I'm told the volunteers are backed up for four months."

Which is one reason why we are fighting a war and losing a revolution in South Vietnam. The backbone of any army is its N.C.O.s and company-grade officers, and it is no accident that most of the American advisers attached to the Vietnamese army are sergeants, first lieutenants and captains in their twenties. A man must see combat before he is truly a soldier. Our World War II veterans are middle-aged desk soldiers now, and even our Korean veterans are in their thirties and passing beyond the stage where they might be leading platoons and companies in a future war. Thus there is a very human desire on the part of the U.S. Army to exploit the chaos in Southeast Asia to train a new generation of combat-experienced soldiers.

Not all American servicemen in South Vietnam share this attitude. Many, probably a majority, did not want to come here, and now that they are here they would like nothing better than to go home. But the professional soldiers are positively gleeful at this chance to advance their professional status.

Professionalism is not the only reason we are overemphasizing the military's role in Southeast Asia. There is also the fact that soldiers are bound to view affairs from a military standpoint, even if the results are discouraging, as they have been so far. The appointment of General Maxwell Taylor as our ambassador to South Vietnam can hardly be expected to reverse this tendency.

But even more crucial is our refusal to name the fighting here for what it is: a revolution. For a people born out of revolution, we are strangely reluctant to recognize the symptoms in other lands. We insist that this is war—guerrilla war, limited war, counterinsurgency war, *some* kind of war—despite all evidence to the contrary. I have spent two months in South Vietnam. I have been shot at, rained on and chewed by insects, but never have I had the feeling that I was witnessing a war. Most correspondents who go out into the field have a similar experience. Full-scale battles are such a rarity here that when one does take place, like the Do Xa operation in June, the trophies are flown to Saigon for exhibition, and mass decorations are awarded in the public squares.

I tried the notion of revolution upon several American advisers. The most common retort was: "If this isn't a war, why are they shooting at me?" I pointed out that men were being shot for civil rights activities in the States. Was that war? "But they're not using automatic weapons," was the reply, ignoring the fact that most of the Vietcong's automatic weapons have been captured from government forces.

A more sophisticated argument goes like this: revolutions are indigenous to the country, while the fighting in South Vietnam is directed from Hanoi. This "masked aggression" theory is official Army doctrine. Quite apart from the fact that most revolutions — including our own—were assisted by foreign powers, it overlooks the evidence which suggests that even hard-core

Daniel F. Ford, a free-lance journalist, has been in South Vietnam for the past two months on a magazine writer's grant from the Philip M. Stern Family Fund. This is the last article in a series he has written for The Nation *from the war zone.*

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Vietcong are recruited locally. They may have been sent to North Vietnam for training, but most of them were born south of the 17th parallel. And our trust in military force is helping guarantee that this situation will continue. As long as the countryside is considered enemy territory, the Vietnamese-American campaign will generate as many Vietcong guerrillas as it kills. That is one reason why our estimate of hard-core Vietcong strength — 25,000 to 30,000 men—has remained almost constant since 1961.

In a wry echo of the headquarters major, an elderly representative of the United States Operations Mission (USOM is the local alias of the Agency for International Development) said to me:

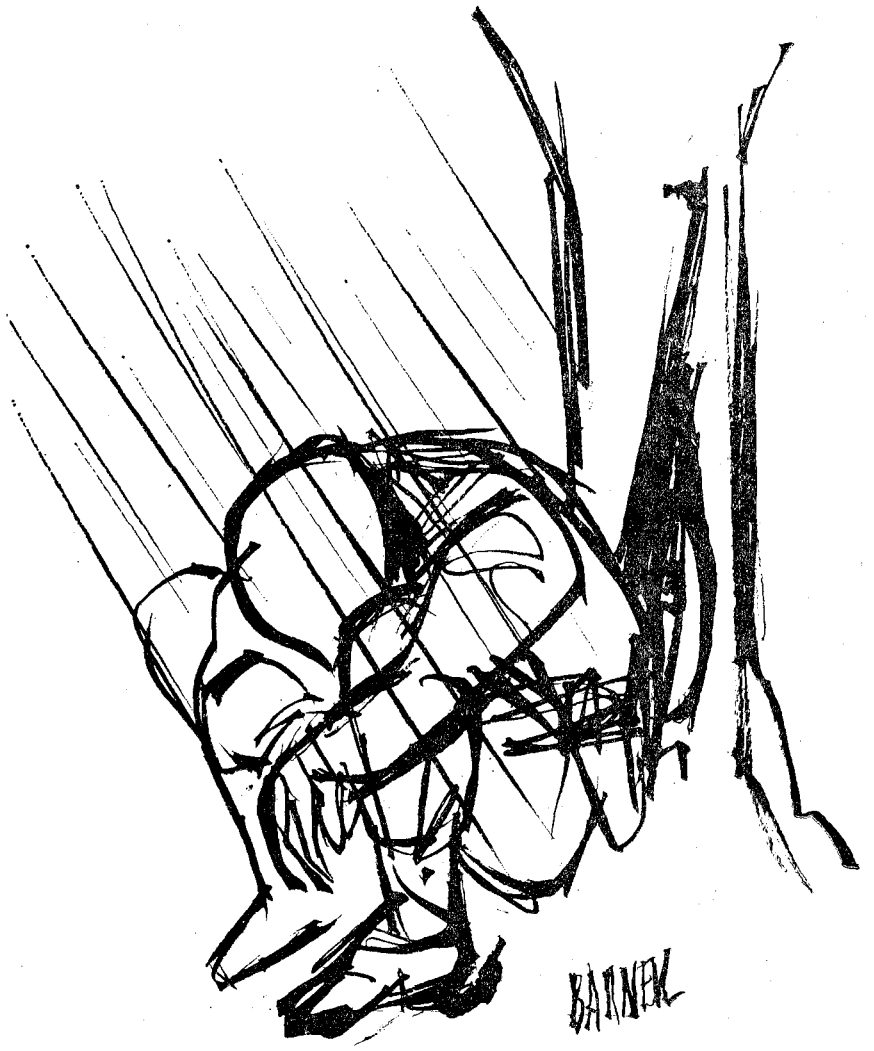
"We have some of the finest soldiers in the world assigned to South Vietnam. But what does a military man know about the people? Will they talk to a soldier, knowing what they do of soldiers? No. But I am a fat old man; they talk to me. They ask me why the United States talks about democracy while it is supporting a military dictatorship. They ask me why we talk about freedom when we are taking them from their homes and herding them into strategic hamlets, like criminals. I have no answer."

What would he do for a Western victory in South Vietnam?"

"We should cut our military advisers to the 1962 level, 5,000 or 6,000 men, and put the difference into volunteers who know the people, who want to help the people. Like the IVS workers [International Voluntary Service, similar to the Peace Corps and predating it]. The people trust them. I have never heard of an IVS worker being harmed, or even threatened. Soldiers must travel in convoys here, but the IVS can go anywhere."

Quality goes down as numbers go up, but there is no doubt that several thousand young volunteers—teachers, nurses and technicians—could do far more than the same number of soldiers to bring Western ideals to South Vietnam. And they could do it far more cheaply. The Peace Corps has functioned admirably around the world without benefit of officers' clubs, post exchanges and all the other accessories that go with a U.S. Army compound.

It would be unfair to suggest that our military effort in South Vietnam



is entirely confined to hunting the elusive Vietcong. The Army is trying hard to adjust to the demands of revolution, by whatever name. "Civic action" is almost a cant phrase in military circles these days —there is even a new S-5 section in the Army staff organization, devoted to psychological warfare and civic action. Army engineers are digging wells and building bridges all over South Vietnam, and Special Forces is constructing a model farm near Pleiku where *montagnard* peasants can learn to use fertilizer and irrigation pipes. There are dedicated, inventive soldiers in every outfit, but any ex-GI knows how much of this dedication and inventiveness is destined to be smothered by the routine of Army life. Whatever the U.S. military is doing now to help the Vietnamese, the same number of volunteer civilians could do far more.

Opportunities are particularly abundant in the Central Highlands where the *montagnard* population is only beginning to emerge from the dark ages. A few miles from Pleiku, the military headquarters for fully one-fourth of South Vietnam, I visited *montagnard* settlements which had never seen a doctor or a schoolteacher.

"Talk about people that don't have a chance," one American captain said in amazement. "What will these kids do with their lives? Why, I'll bet if you asked every one of the 400 people in this village who the premier of their country was, they wouldn't be able to tell you."

That was overstating the extent of education among the *montagnards*. Most of them do not know that they have a country, let alone a premier.

I asked the USOM representative in Pleiku why we did not spend more of our money for schools, instead of for armored personnel carriers. "A schoolteacher here earns 600 piasters a month—about $6," he said. "A coolie sweeping the streets can earn 30 piasters a day. We can't recruit enough teachers

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to staff the schools we are building."

So I asked him why we didn't match the teachers' salaries with an equal amount from American funds, and he could only shrug.

The highlands are an especially fertile area for such programs because they are militarily quiet. The Mekong Delta may have deteriorated too far for education, agriculture and medicine to win the countryside back from the Vietcong, and there a military solution may be the only feasible one. But the highlands are a different matter. The Vietcong operates only in small units, usually consisting of irregulars, and even the U.S. military regards two vehicles as a sufficient convoy in most areas. For this reason the highlands have the lowest priority in everything—even in the assignment of IVS and USOM workers. Yet if the military believed its own doctrine—that the revolution here is a war staged and supplied from North Vietnam—surely the opposite should be the case. The highlands are the logical infiltration route from Laos and Cambodia. If the *montagnards* were won over to the Vietnamese Government, the Vietcong supply line would be cut and (if the military view is correct) their war in the delta would be choked off. Whether the "masked aggression" theory is right or wrong, we are making a tragic mistake in the highlands.

More likely, the fighting in the delta would continue even if the highlands were pacified. But that is a military assessment, and our error in South Vietnam has been to think in military terms. A peaceful, prosperous central highlands would demonstrate to the rest of the nation that the government has more to offer than the Vietcong. Victory for the West in this revolution waits upon that demonstration. If we make it, we shall win; if we do not, we deserve to lose.

I shall never forget the afternoon I watched three young men through binoculars, convinced that they were hard-core Vietcong soldiers. They were strong-featured and alert, dressed in black; they were cooking dinner behind a boulder about 500 yards from the spot where our Strike Force patrol was taking a ten-minute break. A squad had been sent out to encircle them. But the young men heard the snap and rustle of moving soldiers. They stood up, ready to flee. The American Special Forces sergeant in charge of the patrol decided to fire while he still had a target. He fired twice, aiming into a cleft in the boulder, and his buddy did the same. Then we sprinted up the hill. The three young men had fled, unharmed, leaving behind not weapons but a much-thumbed copybook of the kind used in rural schools.

The sergeant was troubled by the idea of shooting at schoolboys.

"Well, I'm glad we missed," he said. Then he brightened. "But if those guys weren't Vietcong an hour ago, they sure as hell are by now."

Things were right in his world again. He did not seem at all concerned by the likelihood that, instead of lessening the Vietcong threat, our patrol had added to it.

Goldwaterism

The New Ideology . . . . . Carey McWilliams

San Diego

Most critics of Goldwaterism echo Emmet John Hughes's conclusion that "it is a movement in search of a program, a mood in want of a doctrine." But this is not true; Goldwaterism has both a program and a doctrine. It is not to be found, however, in Goldwater's credo or in the San Francisco platform but at lower levels where the ideology of the movement is spelled out crudely and bluntly. Two tracts, distributed in quantity by Goldwater delegations at the Cow Palace convention — overall several million copies have been circulated — constitute basic guides to an understanding of Goldwaterism, its program and its doctrine, its inner logic and its real thrust. One is "A Choice Not An Echo" by Phyllis Schlafly (120 pp., Pere Marquette Press), the other "None Dare Call It Treason" by John A. Stormer (236 pp., Liberty Bell Press). The authors are active "new breed" Republicans. Mrs. Schlafly is president, Illinois Federation of Republican Women; she was a delegate to the convention. Mr. Stormer, formerly an Air Force historian, is chairman, Missouri Federation of Young Republicans and a member of the State Republican Committee.

The program of Goldwaterism — its hard core of meaning — derives from its attitude toward the Eastern Establishment. In Goldwater circles, Mrs. Schlafly's tract is accepted as the basic document on the Eastern Establishment, i. e., "the eastern internationalist power structure" and its "kingmakers" who, meeting as conspirators in secret sessions, dominated Republican Presidential politics from 1936 to 1964. In the conspiratorial sense, the existence of such an Establishment is of course debatable; but the existence of an established Eastern seaboard upper class, with certain shared general interests, based on largely inherited wealth, and controlled through a network of financial institutions, trusts and interlocking family connections, is an economic reality which E. Digby Baltzell and other social historians have documented. On occasion this Establishment has indeed carried out skillfully plotted political maneuvers. The venerated Robert A. Taft attributed his failure to win the nomination in 1952, in the first instance, to "the power of the New York financial interest and a large number of businessmen subject to New York influence."

On this substratum of fact, the Goldwaterites have constructed a political myth which has become an article of faith throughout the movement. According to this myth, the kingmakers who, largely through their control of the news media, were able to force the rank and file of "honest conservatives" to accept Alf Landon, Wendell Willkie, Thomas E. Dewey, Dwight Eisenhower and Richard M. Nixon, have never been primarily interested in winning Republican victories; their main concern has been to force the Republicans to nominate candidates who, on matters essential to the Eastern Establish-

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ment, have seen eye to eye with the Democratic nominees.

In this reading, the abiding interest of the Eastern Establishment has been the protection of its overseas — primarily European — investments. It has been and remains primarily a moneyed elite, symbolized by "Wall Street," preoccupied with investments and world trade. It connived to bring about American involvement in World Wars I and II and has consistently supported the cold war in which it has a strong vested interest. The kingmakers have made "large profits . . . in acting as depository or fiscal agent, or attorney for the recipients of immense sums, or as broker for the seller of goods purchased under the foreign-aid program, both here and abroad." Active kingmakers — Thomas E. Dewey and others — have made huge fees representing foreign governments interested in economic aid programs. Because of its basic orientation, the Eastern Establishment has never been dedicated to winning a clear-cut "victory"; on the contrary, it has deliberately sought to continue the stalemated cold war from which it has profited so handsomely. In fact, the long-term goal of the Eastern seaboard Machiavellis has been to promote, first, some kind of U.S.A.-USSR "unification," and then world government, all by way of creating new opportunities for the kind of financial shenanigans in which they excel. This deceitful foreign policy, so cleverly pursued on a bipartisan basis by the Eastern Establishment, is held accountable for every aspect of the "domestic mess" — internal subversion, farm surpluses, race riots, corruption, inflation, centralized government, urban overcrowding, etc.—which Eisenhower promised to clean up but didn't. The Establishment includes Morgans, Lamonts, Rockefellers, the late John Foster Dulles and his brother, Henry Luce, Gardner Cowles, Thomas E. Dewey (an arch villain), *The New York Times,* Robert A. Lovett, John McCloy, Douglas Dillon, General Lucius Clay, Paul Hoffman, Walter Lippmann (a long-time leftist and Fabian Socialist), the Alsops, Henry Cabot Lodge, Christian Herter, Thomas R. McCabe, Thomas S. Gates, Arthur W. Dean, Sidney Weinberg, Lehman Bros., Brown Bros. Harriman, Walter Thayer, Kuhn Loeb, Robert B. Anderson (just how this Texan managed to sneak in is not explained) and the 1,400 members of the Council on Foreign Affairs.

Steep yourself long enough in this mythology and the real drift of the Goldwater program becomes clear. The first objective is to destroy or contain the power of the Eastern Establishment, not because it is pro-war — as the late Senator Taft charged — but because it is pro-peace. It shackles American power; it will not permit us to pursue "victory" as an objective. It doesn't want to win because it wants to wallow in profits from the cold war. If not actually pro-peace, the Eastern Establishment is anti-nuclear war. It seeks to promote trade, which it can finance, and overseas outlets for capital, which it can supply. True, the Eastern Establishment foments brush-fire wars because of "imperialist" interests in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, but it does not want to provoke an all-out war. Nor is it wholly hostile to disarmament, negotiated agreements, the UN, the World Court, trade with the USSR and Eastern Europe, etc. Because it frustrates achievement of their grand designs, the Goldwaterites seek first to discredit and then — eventually—to supersede the Eastern Establishment. The first step—curtailment of the Establishment's power in the Republican Party—has now been achieved.

The program of Goldwaterism is implicit in its attitude toward the Eastern Establishment. Since all domestic problems are merely by-products of our failure to kill the snake of communism, "conservatism" at home becomes the logical counterpart of an aggressive foreign policy. Foreign economic aid would be virtually eliminated. (The Citizens Foreign Aid Committee, which seeks to eliminate overseas spending, is headed by Brig. Gen. Bonner Fellers and Walter Harnischfeger, the Milwaukee tycoon and sponsor of the late Joe McCarthy, both Goldwater enthusiasts.) Welfare spending would be cut to the bone and no new programs initiated.

These and other cuts would make possible tax reductions despite a sharp increase in military spending — some for the Army, some for the Navy, but a great deal for the Air Force and the military aspects of the space program. ("There is little doubt in anyone's mind what the election of Sen. Barry Goldwater to the Presidency of the United States would do for the defense business. . . . " William J. Couglin, *Missiles and Rockets,* July 20, 1964.) Since the aerospace industries are largely concentrated in Goldwater country, it is assumed that the Anti-Establishment Establishment would be the principal long-term beneficiary. The fact that the wicked Eastern Establishment might own a substantial piece of these industries — or even control them — does not dim the enthusiasm of the Goldwater mythmakers for aerospace spending which, as they see it, greatly stimulates the general economy of the South, Southwest and California, regardless of who garners the lion's share of the direct profits. During the California primary, for example, the Goldwaterites made much of the fact that Rockefeller favored a fairer regional distribution of defense spending.

Strategically, Goldwaterism is committed to Air Force doctrine. Seek out confrontations; call the Communist bluff; the "enemy" can be relied upon — given the Sino-Soviet split — to back down not once but again and again; if necessary, drop the bomb. But *never,* repeat *never,* let up on the pressure until total "victory" has been achieved. For freedom cannot survive here unless freedom — defined in Goldwater's terms — flourishes from Lisbon to Saigon, from the Congo to the North Pole. In pursuit of this strategy, the Air Force would no longer be kept under vexatious civilian control; the generals would be permitted to call the shots — in the field. In brief, Goldwaterism would replace the "no-win" containment policy of the effete Eastern Establishment with a "victory" or war strategy. As Goldwater has said: "The opposite of victory is defeat — not coexistence or compromise."

A definite doctrine supports this program. It is set forth, in detail, in the Stormer tract. What began a generation back as an anti-Communist propaganda line — a means of redbaiting New Dealers and such—has now become a massive impenetrable myth. There is no point whatever, at this late date, in seeking to disentangle the false-

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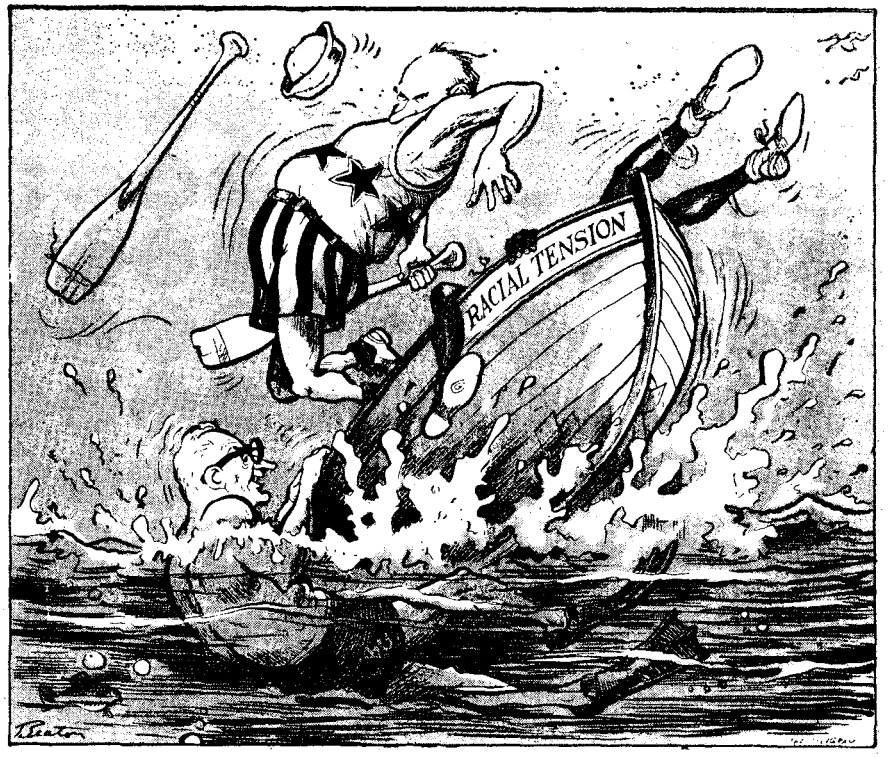
hoods, distortions and *non sequiturs* from the occasional half-truths and fractional truths that constitute this legend. Such an effort would be enormously difficult and, in the end, entirely futile. A generation has been nourished on this myth; they can recite it almost line for line. No refutation would convince them; they have a ready-made answer for every objection. Besides, the assumptions on which the myth rests have long been conceded by cold-war liberals and the Eastern Establishment.

As it exists today, in all its grotesque amplitude, this myth serves a number of important functions. It insulates the true believers from any chance contact with objective reality; it encases them in a self-sealing, all-sufficient doctrine. But it also serves other functions. It is designed to discredit every institution in American society that—like the Eastern Establishment—stands in the way of Goldwaterism's grand design: the total eclipse of "the international Communist conspiracy" through surrender or incineration. Rejected as Communist-infiltrated or tainted with heresy are: the Supreme Court, the schools (at all levels), the tax-exempt foundations, the press (all media), the churches, the trade unions, etc. The attack on the press does not represent legitimate criticism and it is folly to regard it in this light. "For the first time in modern political history," writes Richard Starnes in the *New York World-Telegram*, "we are seeing a major party undertake a concerted campaign to intimidate and bullyrag press and radio-TV." And not without some initial success; already a section of the press has begun to "soften" its attitude and to "reconsider" its criticism and, here and there, even to apologize for past affronts. Speakers at the Cow Palace glibly ticked off such categories of those opposed to Goldwater as "Walter Reuther, Walter Lippmann, *The New York Times* and *Pravda*." *The New York Times* is singled out not because it is more critical of Goldwater than many other publications but because it is a symbol of the best in American journalism. The right-wing radio commentators have been directing a systematic campaign against the press for months now. The Associated Press is staffed with "liars," etc. Don't read the press because it is not to be believed. Listen instead to a reliable right-wing radio commentator



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or dial a number—such numbers are now available in most communities—and listen to a tape-recorded summary of the late news. All this has nothing to do with "criticism"; it is designed to insulate the true believers from exposure to reality and, at the same time, to place the press on the defensive. The Goldwater mythmakers seek to discredit every institution and all prominent public figures identified with "containment" and other "short-of-war" policies. Even Eisenhower and Nixon get rough handling in the Schlafly and Stormer tracts.

Numerically, the most significant and influential of the groups that have been caught up in the Goldwater mythology is the new middle class of the South, Southwest and West (including the West Coast states). Under the umbrella of welfare spending and defense spending, and other federally financed goodies, this new middle class has "struck it rich"—in construction, insurance, appliance and auto dealerships, savings and loan, service industries, etc.—and is myopically self-centered. It is firmly — unshakably — convinced that its success is due exclusively to the drive and energy and initiative of its members. Of the forces that have created a general economic environment conducive to rapid growth in the South, Southwest and California they are blissfully oblivious. Drawn along in the wake of this new middle class are legions of "bright young men" who want to make it big—in a hurry—and who, opportunistically or from conviction, mouth the slogans of the ignorant new rich. It is startling to hear, for example, a young college-educated trainee for a chain store (receiving $600 a month as a trainee) say that he is determined, if it is the last act of his life, to get those "welfare people" off his back! Why, if Goldwater doesn't succeed in reversing present trends, social security rates may double in a decade, etc. Old-age pensioners, favorable to pensions and medicare, often repeat the same slogans and inveigh bitterly against "those on welfare." Stories about abuses in the Aid to Dependent Children program—most of them grotesquely inflated — are legion; they are part of the folklore of the Goldwater movement.

This new middle class, with its auxiliaries and retainers, has been spawned by the affluence of the cold-war years. It reflects, in rigid form, the cumulative acquisitiveness and arrogance of the period. Many of the young pushers and shovers in the movement expect to "make it big" by the time they are 40; they cannot conceive—and will not concede—that there is any like-

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lihood whatever that the long-continued boom of the federally favored regions they inhabit could ever end. To some extent, their counterparts may be found in the Middle West and East but there they are neither so numerous nor so vocal; in the Goldwater belt they are loud, numerous and chesty. As Nixon shrewdly observed in a recent interview, these new-money types often seem to be undergoing "some kind of personal rebellion." They harbor a variety of resentments—against their own antecedents, against those pushing up from below, against those on the next rung above them. Hostility to what they regard as the snobbish ruling elite of the Eastern Establishment accounts for part of their belligerence and ebullience. With them "Ivy League," in any context, carries poisonous connotations. Self-satisfied and socially insensitive, their general attitude can be summarized in a phrase: "To hell with you, Jack." This general attitude reflects, of course, great underlying tension and insecurity.

Like any new rising middle class, this one has a superabundance of drive and energy. The Eastern elite, by contrast, has much less bounce. In the jargon of the sociologists, it is less "achievement-oriented" — characteristically its wealth derives from inheritance — and it is more "other-directed." Now and then it produces "deviant aristocrats" — Roosevelts, Harrimans, Rockefellers —who are denounced as "traitors to their class." The new middle class of the newly affluent regions has few liberal deviants; it is much too concerned with preserving what it has just recently acquired. A statement by Baltzell points up the difference between the two elites: "Whenever an upper-class way of life becomes an end in itself, rather than a means of consolidating its power and influence, that upper class has outlived its functions."

With typical vaulting exuberance, the kingmakers of the new Anti-Establishment-Establishment propose to move Wall Street down to Dallas or Houston—in time. If their initial efforts should fail, it will not be the first time that Texas aspiration has outrun Texas power; the Murchisons were able to acquire control of the New York Central but they were soon pushed out. No doubt there is a great deal of money behind Goldwater, but even so the money men of the movement have now gone East, hat in hand, seeking campaign contributions. They may find that the wise and cynical men who view politics from handsome offices high up in Manhattan skyscrapers are not exactly enchanted with the well-advertised threats that have been leveled against the Eastern Establishment of which they are a part. Even in "the missile crescent" the really big fortunes as well as the bigger defense contractors are—for the time being at least—pro-Administration. But it is not unthinkable that some of these interests may be tempted to "buy in" on the new movement or come to terms with it.

However this may be, the Goldwater movement deserves careful study, particularly in its long-term implications. It reflects an economic reality that is just beginning to surface. The sunshine belt that stretches from Canaveral to San Diego, elated by the success of Ranger 7, is now enjoying the prospect of a $20 billion expenditure on a variety of space projects, with more to come, programs without end. What the new middle class of this great stretch of country has discovered is the nearly perfect formula for feeding public money into the private sector; politically it is much easier to push a $5.2 billion space appropriation through Congress than to get 1 per cent of this sum for slum eradication. The "space frontier" is booming and the boom may well continue for a long time. The fastest growing new-industry section of the country now stretches from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. The missile crescent is spawning a whole new complex of industries, and "space frontiersmen" confidently predict that Houston will be "the largest American city" in the future. "No longer can a Wall Street bank," writes Drew Pearson, "phone a Western bank and threaten to cut off deposits if the GOP delegates don't switch from Goldwater to Scranton. It was done on behalf of Mr. Eisenhower. But it can't be done any more. . . . Today, California is the biggest state in the Union. The Bank of America is the biggest bank in the world. Kaiser Aluminum, with headquarters in San Francisco, is the second biggest aluminum company in the U.S.; while Pacific Gas & Electric is approximately ten times larger than any other utility in the United States." Such facts are not too significant in themselves but they point to an emerging reality that merits close attention. In the past, social power has waxed and waned as shifts have taken place in the sources of energy; the great utility, iron and steel, railroad and coal fortunes brought the Eastern aristocracy into being; the consumer-goods boom of the twenties and thirties—oil and gas and automobiles — established new groupings, etc. It is not therefore inconceivable that the center of power may be shifting to the South and Southwest and to the Pacific Coast. "The mainstream of the Republican Party," to quote Nixon, "has moved distinctly to the right" since 1960. "It is impossible," he adds, "to assess this change without a knowledge of what has happened in the West, for this conservative surge is to a very great extent a Western surge."

What, then, is Goldwaterism? Implicit in the new amalgam of forces which it represents are the discontents, frustrations, resentments, tensions and hostilities of an affluent society, particularly the special kind of affluence one finds in the West and South and Southwest. Affluence breeds resentments in somewhat the same way that poverty breeds anger — resentment against the speed of social and technological change, against the irritations of an increasingly bureaucratic society, against the frustrations of the cold war, against welfare liberalism, against the Negro revolt, against other irritations unnamed and unidentified. The new amalgam is fed by many sources; it has been forming for a long time; it is a home-grown product, not an importation. Some time back, Charles Bolton in these pages suggested that the new amalgam should be called Uncle Samism. Call it Samism or Goldwaterism, it must be studied for what it is, not for what it resembles or what people imagine it to be. From the outset, Goldwaterism has greatly benefited from the circumstance that it was not taken seriously in some quarters and was taken too seriously in others. If it is not to continue to enjoy this advantage, then the movement—its program and doctrine, its strategy and its sources of energy—should be spotlighted between now and November. The way to beat Goldwaterism is to make it the central issue of the campaign.

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Baruch and His Legend . . . . . Albert A. Blum

On August 19, 1964, the nation celebrated the 94th birthday of a man who has become a part of American folklore. Most Americans believe that Bernard M. Baruch played a dominant role in American politics and business throughout the first half of the twentieth century, but he is a man who has achieved eminence, not so much by what he has done as by what the public thinks he has done. In that sense, he has had greatness thrust upon him.

At the time of his 90th birthday, Baruch published the second volume of his autobiography. The first, *My Own Story,* dealt with his earlier years on Wall Street; the second, *The Public Years,* covers the period when he was intimately involved in politics. Other books have been written about the financier-politician, notably one by the Pulitzer Prize-winner, Margaret Coit. Articles, newspaper stories and editorials greeted Baruch on his birthday as they have punctuated his life. More has been written about him than about many presidents.

That Baruch contributed much to American political and economic life is obvious. His work as head of the War Industries Board under Wilson; his assistance as an economic adviser at the Versailles peace conference; his struggle for farm reform and for industrial mobilization planning; his programs during World War II to help end the manpower shortage on the West Coast, to end the rubber shortage, and to lessen the impact of reconversion after the war; and his frustrating, though valuable, struggle to implement the Baruch-Acheson-Lilienthal program for the control of atomic energy should satisfy anyone that Baruch did not spend his time after leaving Wall Street (where he took pride in calling himself a speculator) only counting his money.

Today, many Americans wonder along with the *Denver Post*: "What Do Puzzled Nations Do Who Don't Have Any Bernard Baruch?" But the *Post* was not puzzled because of Baruch's achievements at the posts we mentioned. The paper and the American public saw Baruch's hand and mind as nearly always being at the beck and call of American Presidents. He was the man behind the scenes, giving advice, helping out when needed. What could Wilson, Roosevelt and Truman have done *without Baruch*? He was their indispensable lieutenant, the man ready to bring to bear his mind, his time and his money on any problem. That Baruch was always ready to give advice is no doubt true. That his advice was always sought or accepted is far less true. He worked with Wilson only during the war years, with Roosevelt only when Roosevelt wanted, and with Truman only for a relatively short period which ended with Truman barely speaking to him. The myth of the Wall Street politician's influence is pervasive; he calls himself a "man of legend" — but it is a legend formed at least in part by the excellent press he normally received; Baruch has been close to some of the country's leading newspaper men.

The Baruch mystique also affects historians of the period. Shortly before the Second World War, Roosevelt, prompted by the then Assistant Secretary of War Louis Johnson, set up the War Resources Board—but to the dismay of many without Baruch at its helm. This organization (so at least Johnson believed) was to study the problems of economic mobilization during war, develop a plan and take over control of economic life once America began to mobilize. The head of the board was thus to be the chief of America's wartime economic program — a job Baruch undoubtedly wanted and almost got.

When he was not given the position, according to Eliot Janeway (*The Struggle for Survival;* Yale University Press, 1951) he took action. He influenced his friend, Hugh Johnson, to launch an attack against the War Resources Board's leader-

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ship—thereby hoping to discredit it. He had another friend, John Hancock, made a member of the board, so that together they could write its recommendations. Moreover, says Janeway, Roosevelt had agreed "in advance to accept" this plan and even made certain suggestions which were incorporated in it.

Note the almost Machiavellian cleverness that Baruch is supposed to have used—even to his influence over Roosevelt. But there is no evidence that the story is correct. Johnson did attack the board, and vitriolically, but Johnson was not known for a kindly pen, and the fact that he was Baruch's friend does not mean he was his puppet. Hancock did join the board, and did write the final report; but Baruch denies that he had anything to do with the writing, and there is no record in Baruch's files that he did.

But if in fact Baruch had contributed to the WRB report, that would prove not that he was working closely with Roosevelt, but rather that he had no real awareness of what Roosevelt's ideas were concerning mobilization. It is doubtful that Roosevelt realized what kind of monster he was creating when he authorized the start of the War Resources Board, but he surely moved quickly to destroy it once he found out. Roosevelt never planned to permit the board to run the economic mobilization of the country. He had decided, even while the WRB was at work, that when the need for a committee to handle economic mobilization should arise (as it did in 1940) he would re-create the weak National Defense Advisory Committee. And so the War Resources Board was buried in 1939—not by anything that Baruch did or did not do, but by a strong President who had different ideas.

This event, interesting as it is as one phase of Roosevelt's approach to the war and to administration, is equally interesting because an informed observer saw Baruch as operating on both sides of a problem—on one hand, helping to destroy an agency and on the other hand, supporting it. Though this is not an accurate description of Baruch's role, it none the less is a key to understanding his reputation in our society. Baruch's fame as a political power rests on the fact that he was and is many men to many people: a non-Jewish Jew; a Southern Northerner; a farmer urbanite; a plebian patrician; a realistic idealist; and an independent nonpartisan Democrat.

To the Jewish immigrants seeking a place in American society, any Jew who had political importance was proof to all that they, too, could find their niche. They took great pride in the Brandeises and in the Baruchs. They cheered with Danny Kaye when he interrupted his show at the Palace Theatre to announce that "we have in our midst one of the great Americans of all time, an elder statesmen, whose name will go ringing down the corridors of history. I give you Mr. Bernard M. Baruch."

Not only to the Jew but also to the anti-Semite, Baruch appeared more powerful than he actually was. To the Ku Klux Klan, Baruch typified the Jewish financiers' control over America; and they rushed to burn a cross on his lawn at Hobcaw despite the fact that his father, after the Civil War, belonged to the Klan. Henry Ford saw Baruch as "the most powerful man in the world," a "Jew of Super Power," in a series of articles dealing with "The Scope of Jewish Dictatorship in the United States."

To both Jew and anti-Semite, Baruch was a tremendous power. But what kind of Jew was this man from South Carolina? In his immediate family he was a lonely Jew. His wife was not Jewish; in fact, he married her in an Episcopal service. His daughters are not Jewish. One biographer reports that Baruch once thought he could have been President (a goal he denies he ever had) if he had not been born a Jew.

Baruch viewed himself as basically a Southerner, but he spent little of his life there. Born in South Carolina, he left at the age of 11 to live in New York. When he became independently wealthy, he purchased an estate at Hobcaw in South Carolina where he and his guests, some of the great names of American political and public life, gathered during the winters. He kept close ties with such Southern politicians as Byrnes and Byrd. It was good to have a Southern background during the years after the Civil War—particularly when you could also be a Northerner. Baruch spent a major share of his life in New York and there played his most active role—either in Wall Street or in politics. In the North he also had close ties with political leaders — with Al Smith, to name just one who was not popular with most Southerners. To many Southerners, Baruch was a rebel—of rebel stock. To many Northerners, he was a Yankee—a Yankee businessman. In short, he was a rare, but politically attractive, rebel "Yankee."

Though not to such a pronounced degree, Baruch was also a farmer urbanite. He took great pride in his father's experimental work in agriculture, his own farm in South Carolina, and the work he did with George Peek to develop an agricultural program for America during the 1920s and 1930s. This same man was famed for his work in the big city—New York—his love for the theatre, for gambling, for all the things that make a city exciting, and for the financial successes that mainly came out of a city which, above all others, frightened farmers. Imagine how the Populist, Tom Watson, would have viewed a Wall Street Jew who posed as a farm specialist.

But it is in the field of politics that Baruch is best known and here we find him in the role of a Democrat who insisted on being considered an independent who would not run for office. Before conventions, he refused to commit himself to any candidates. He wrote to Truman, who asked him to be on the party's finance committee in 1948, "I have never yet served on any committee of the Party, nor have I ever made a political statement." From Baruch's point of view, his not becoming involved in the support of any individual or any group within the Democratic Party made him better able to serve. To his critics, it showed a certain lack of courage: a refusal to commit himself to one man or one group so that he could be sure to be able to work with the victor. "Here, then, is the tragedy," writes his generally sympathetic biographer, Margaret Coit. "Baruch, unwilling to face defeat—Baruch, who has always had to win—has taken refuge behind his legend."

The tragedy may be Baruch's, but the danger is ours. It rests in our inability to see the real person behind the images he or his supporters or enemies project. We have viewed Baruch through lenses that made a good man into a great one. The danger is that the next time the man may not even be good.

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Leaves of Glass

THE BOURGEOIS POET. By Karl Shapiro. Random House. 120 pp. $4. $1.95 paper.

Webster Schott

"Poem is it de rigueur to descend to hell? Will you lose your pedigree. . . . Why are the sick the most articulate? Poetry weaving at the bar, go home. Somebody call a cab." Karl Shapiro's *The Bourgeois Poet* disembowels poetry and hands us its heart.

It has been a long and painful discovery, but Shapiro finally has concluded that formal literature can no longer deal with a reality whose form is chaos. Clobbered by the absurd present, Shapiro says: "There's only one defense: betray thyself." Later in this same prose poem about the need to deny his past, he locates the riches of self-betrayal. "At the bottom of the garbage heap lie the actual poems."

Fiercely American but of French descent, Shapiro's prose poems are pure autism and corrupted autobiography. He clowns with his life—the failure of success, lust fantasies, misplaced fanaticism, culture mongering, family secrets, academic boondoggling, island warfare — and pronounces America crazy in the bargain. In a state near controlled shock he celebrates his and our surrender to the absurd. With poetry that rids itself of the "poetic" but holds to style ("The beauty is gone across the fence, the busted nose in poetry"), he marries black humor with white passion.

At a dead end with official poetry, Shapiro said last year, "I tried to find the common forms—like the joke. I had to break the meter. Nearly all Americans have at one time or another. There's a lot of beautifully mechanical poetry being written now. It doesn't mean anything. We must get closer to the life rhythm of America. The iambic foot and rhyme aren't it. Maybe prose poetry is."

It isn't one of the half-breed Beats who has moved off the Poetry Reservation in *The Bourgeois Poet.* It's a chief, and he left his palomino behind to roar off in a Thunderbird with a beer can between his knees and copies of De-Sade and Wilhelm Reich in the back seat. Shapiro's reputation, based on seven books of poetry and two of criticism, figures in all this. It shows what he is putting on the line in turning to poetry that denies prosody, of which he is a master. Furthermore, the consequences of the reputation wounded Shapiro so deeply the scars become one of the recurrent themes of *The Bourgeois Poet*:

> *. . . When I meet the almighty Publicity Director, name-dropper of kings, I'll shake his hand and say: once I kissed Fame (mouth like an ass hole) but only for fun.*

Karl Shapiro returned from the war in the Pacific a poet-hero, one of the few in our history. Kids read "Troop Train" in *National Scholastic.* His elders read *Person, Place and Thing* (1942), *V-Letter* (1944) and *Essay on Rime* (1945), and pronounced him spokesman for his generation and very nearly savior of American verse. F. O. Mattheissen said *Essay on Rime* might be "the most remarkable contribution to American art yet to have come out of the war," and Conrad Aiken believed Shapiro had "quite startlingly changed everything." He won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1946, became consultant in poetry to the Library of Congress at the age of 33 (where he prepared our first bibliography of modern prosody), and for six years edited *Poetry* magazine, that curious and necessary institution of American verse. All doors opened: the Iowa Writers' Workshop, Johns Hopkins, the University of California, Salzburg, Kenyon College and the University of Nebraska where he teaches now. The prizes, praises and emoluments are too many to list: they were also too much—"Albatross of a prize, you who married me to a newspaper, you who made me a government, why can't I thank you?"

But they were earned the hard way. In the isolation of New Guinea, contemplating his Jewish estrangement and searching his American conscience, Shapiro touched a pulse and felt pleas for life. Flashing wit and bulging muscle, he made poetry out of the common emotions of Americans who were thousands of miles from home and didn't know or care why. He wrote war poetry in which the only battles were with memory. His poetry was dense: socially conscious, steeled with satire, richly emotional and lyrical. He had a camera eye for the final detail of place; but human behavior clung to the senses. Between his Auden-Eliot imitations in Baltimore and self-discovery in New Guinea and Australia, Shapiro acquired, as only crucial poets do, the power to invest concrete situations with large meanings.

Moreover, Shapiro's poetry showed innovation in form and prosodic courage that verged on audacity. He manipulated language as if he had invented it. In "Sunday: New Guinea" he took the classical alexandrine and achieved shifts in complacence and intensity the line had never undergone in modern verse. During ninety days in a staging area in the South Pacific he wrote 2,000 lines of flattened iambic pentameter (*Essay on Rime*) that attempted from memory to record the entire history of English poetry and describe its failures. He privately published in Australia a sequence of erotic lyrics and prose poems (*The Place of Love*, 1942) bound together by the panic of "the last personal moment" and a lyrical ego all the more attractive because it was displaced. Included in it were his first prose poems, "The Dirty Word" and "The New Ring," classics of the form in English. Several others, especially "Confessio Amantis" and "The Place of Love" deserve republication. We are old enough now to read them.

Any reconstruction today of modern American poetry totters if it fails to include Shapiro's "The Fly," "Nigger," "Christmas Eve: Australia," "The Dirty Word," and "Sunday: New Guinea." Running contrary to the idea conventions of modern poetry, flirting with the kinds of truths that turn into clichés, as robust as the man-woman honesty of "V-Letter," these poems rose out of our lives. Shapiro found our number and called us up to tell us what we were feeling.

By the time *Poems 1940-1953* and *Poems of a Jew* (1958) appeared, Shapiro had enough literary fire power to begin an attack—the first of widespread effect — on the "pedantic brotherhood" of modern poetry. He said T. S. Eliot resembled "one of those mighty castles in Bavaria which are remarkably visible, famed for their un-

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sightliness, and too expensive to tear down." The "pathetic drama of modern poetry" was that it tried to "make a place for the poet in the modern world by remaking the world." College English departments were engaged in a conspiracy to canonize Pound, Eliot, Yeats and Auden at the expense of authentic American poetry which, he had said as a much younger man, we could not have "until our poets established some equilibrium between themselves and the nation." American speech had never been to Oxford, Cambridge or on a Fulbright to Rome; events in the modern world had left the "poetic" imagination talking to itself.

Shapiro's attacks on Eliot and Auden were attacks on himself. Having used British models he found them poor guides to the immediately American. It amounted to accusing the College of Cardinals of Catholicism, but he was correct. Only William Carlos Williams, he said, had written enough "true poetry to show the twentieth century that *American* and *poet* are not contradictions in terms." That is not correct unless you agree with Shapiro that "American" means sex, power, advertising, seminal prose and the ossification of culture. Nevertheless, all of Shapiro's prose reads like a program for *The Bourgeois Poet*. His anti-intellectualism, personal eccentricities, critical position and sense of persecution made this book inevitable.

Like John Berryman's *77 Dream Songs*, the poems of Winfield Townley Scott and Williams, *The Bourgeois Poet* attempts to locate poetry in the diction of American conversation, while rising with the surprises and revelations of poetic insight. Some of it scans in iambic feet. Tercets and couplets drop in occasionally — lost robins in a flight of blackbirds—to pull the leg of poetry. Sinister allusions turn Shapiro's narratives into messages for help thrown over the wall. Apparent rambling is stopped suddenly by lines profuse in implication. The narrator, always Shapiro, moves back and forth in time. The overtones of poetry are here, but the voice is prose.

"What is real in the world; that is what we must learn," Rilke said. Shapiro thinks he knows: contradictions, deceptions, sexual joy, personal ignorance, intellectual defeat. By laughing at the absurd he disarms it. Not only in form but in spirit *The Bourgeois Poet* is nearer contemporary fiction than poetry. Our situation has become so serious the only thing to do is stop taking it seriously. The mental health of this book is exhilarating. It's therapeutic to see the cigar explode in Shapiro's face. Primarily his comedy is black. He shows in himself the disruption of art, values and social arrangements that have made America a psychic disaster area:

I am an atheist who says his prayers.
I am an anarchist, and a full professor at that. I take the loyalty oath.
I am a deviate, I fondle and contribute, backscuttle and brown, father of three.
I stand high in the community. My name is in Who's Who. People argue about my modesty.
I drink my share and yours and never have enough. I freeload officially and unofficially.
A physical coward, I take on all intellectuals, established poets, rabbis, chiefs of staff.
I am a mystic. I will take an oath that I have seen the Virgin. Under the dry pandanus, to the scratching of kangaroo rats, I achieve physic onanism. My tree of nerves electrocutes itself.
I uphold the image of America and force my luck. I write my own ticket to oblivion.
I am of the race wrecked by success. The audience brings me news of my death. I write out of boredom, despise solemnity. The wrong reason is good enough for me.
I am of the race of the prematurely desperate. In poverty of comfort I lay gunpowder plots. I lapse my insurance.
I am the Babbitt metal of the future. I never read more than half a book. But that half I read forever . . .

The essential conceit of *The Bourgeois Poet* comes at the end of this long travesty of Whitman's *Song of Myself*:

This is the camera with the built-in lie. This is the lens that defies the truth. There's nothing for it but to write the large bad poem in middle-class magic. Poem condemned to wear black, be quoted in churches, versatile as Greek. Condemned to remain unsung by criminals.

In our time the big "poem," the work of art, must be misunderstood because this is an anti-poetic age. Therefore Shapiro writes an anti-poetic poem that the hungry eye of the present can really see; human beings must recognize their dehumanization to find the poetry of the present. *The Bourgeois Poet* follows Shapiro's definition of several years ago: "Poetry is not a metaphorical or symbolic version of the world but an actual representation of reality."

Watching the refineries of Tulsa glow by night Shapiro hears the screams of orgasm in an adjoining hotel room and binds the two in a poem about the fusion of sex and power. Nashville's replica of the Parthenon "sits flat on the ground, like a plane crash reconstructed," and through it he senses the American conception of art "bought and sold fifty times a day." Shapiro's teen-age heroes drive into telephone poles at 100 miles an hour. Big businessmen decide policy "by word of mouth like gangsters" in offices where "the very telephones are hard and kissable." His Jews have turned to the Mariolatry of momism. His neighbors' bathrooms are appointed like love nests with erotic stools and black Kleenex. In one of his poems grief parodies smiles. In another he says, "Tell me again what tragedy is. I can never remember." He writes of "The Bourgeois Poet" who changes to "The B. P." and finally "The Beep," becoming a pipe-smoking executive in his businessman's study. "Of love and death in the Garrison State I sing,"

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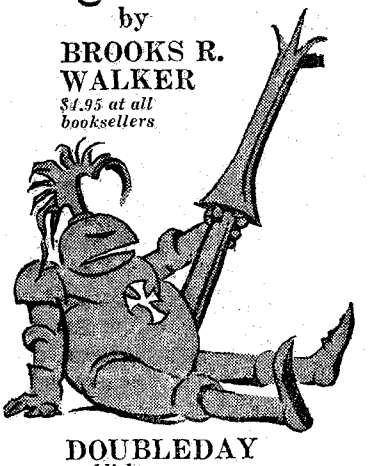

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Shapiro anonunces. And later: "Everything everywhere has been decided in everyone's favor."

These are neither conventional poetic ideas nor conventional figures of speech. They bite. And if their edge comes from the constant posing of opposites ("All truths are paired contradictions, half-truths are absolutes"), it is because Shapiro himself contains so many opposing selves. He can only resolve them by exorcising them with humor: "When I say the Hail Mary I get an erection. Doesn't that prove the existence of God?" Or "I wonder what my neighbors think of me? I hope they think of me."

Shapiro undresses poetry and throws the poetic in the corner. But still certain qualities of *The Bourgeois Poet* return to the familiar. Baudelaire and Rimbaud stand somewhere in the shadows. There's a habitual poetry consciousness. Perhaps a third of the poems deal with the writing of poetry or picture other poets: Dylan Thomas, John Ciardi, Elizabeth Bishop, Theodore Roethke, Richard Eberhart, Delmore Schwartz. Metaphors and symbols work to different effect for Shapiro. However, they're still here, constant and self-perpetuating: age takes the poet through military action; flowers suggest and become women; the ordered Dadaist mess in "Basement Apartment" creates sexual disorientation. Like everyone else, Shapiro does set pieces. He has a splendid time with puns, invidious parallels, double meanings, and quotations twisted or out of context from Auden, Robert Frost, Aldous Huxley, DeSade. Shapiro operates on the same assumptions as "The Waste Land" and the poetry of George Seferis and René Char—epidemic decadence. His radicalism is tempered by the history of poetry.

Speculating about Shapiro's courage and the risks of prose poetry, another poet demanded, "But was it worth the chance?" I think so. There are at least eight unqualified successes in *The Bourgeois Poet* and only a third of the original manuscript is here. (In place of several poems early in the book one would have preferred those published recently in *Poetry* and *Evergreen Review*.) Some of Shapiro's prose poems do approach the outer limits of willfulness, read like faulty translations and use devices for their own sake. Yet the book as a whole exceeds its parts. Shapiro's skill with prose poetry has leaped since *The Place of Love*. His ability competes with his courage. Finally, however, neither skill with form nor literary guts is the issue here.

What distinguishes *The Bourgeois Poet* is Shapiro's conception of modern American life as requiring a total response by the poet in behalf of his fellows. He detects in himself, the poet taken to the cleaner's, all the emotional wounds, frustrated possibilities and moral failures of the present; but belief in anything except the deranged present is bankrupt. In an introduction he abandoned, Shapiro says: "The end is to depict the whole world of my time as I have received it and been a part of it. . . . I want to tell the many kinds of truth." Dissociation becomes integration through the psychic revelation of his art.

Salvatore Quasimodo said that "a poet is a poet when he does not renounce his presence in a given land, at a precise time, politically defined. And poetry is the freedom and truth of that time and not the abstract modulations of sentiment." *The Bourgeois Poet* is poetry of and in our time. Karl Shapiro is still calling us up, now with a hot line plugged into our lives: "My century take savagery to your heart." Shapiro offers us, as Wallace Stevens required, not a solution to the madness of the twentieth century but some defense against it.

ART

WEST COAST ART: VITAL PATHOLOGY

It is a flip trait of much current art to undermine the formal and stylistic analysis of the critic, and to disappoint certain of his humanist expectations. Even the more conservative critics have learned that artists are giving credence to the most unsightly artifacts in American culture, while ambiguously evading responsibility for that credence. If this is a widespread condition of contemporary art, art in California is nothing if not contemporary. I had taken it for granted that the West Coast artists participate in the popular strategy of insult; what I had not suspected, until I visited the state, was their insidious charm. Without being restrictively parochial, their work refuses to be pried loose from the values of its local milieu, and even its physical climate. The problem lies in appreciating the specifically West Coast character of what one sees, and of evaluating a relationship of artists to their environment that verges on cohabitation: faintly indecent, but with all kinds of unexpected possibilities.

As simple orientation, one might do worse than note the tendency of recent California art to separate itself into two opposed strains whose bases are far more physiological than stylistic. These I provisionally call the "Sterilized" and the "Sweaty," though they are at best imprecise categories. Further, there are artists who have practiced both, and one important sculptor who transcends them. Though each camp has philosophical premises, both are most critically engaged with bodily sensations and visceral reactions, to which they have developed a nervous openness.

Within the "Sterilized," no one will overlook the even pastel coloration and the impeccably smooth surfaces of the color-field painter, Robert Irwin, the emblematic art of Billy Al Bengston, the metallic shine and glitter in the work of the object-makers Tony De Lap, Charles Frazier and Larry Bell, nor the piercing chromatic purity and finical honing of shape in the sculptors Lloyd Hamrol and Ken Price. To be sure, these are qualities that partly describe the general reaction of the present generation to Abstract Expressionism, whose brushiness is countered all along the line by "hard" edges, flat planes, and by uniformly and heavily saturated colors. Yet one feels that the young Californians manipulate these elements, not so much through historical necessity, as from an involuntary reflex of taste.

They have an inclination, for instance, for iridescence and for alternating bathroom or stucco wall palettes—the kind of pistachios and corals one sees sprinkled about Los Angeles. Their textures are well scrubbed and highly polished. A special kind of light, high-keyed but ethereal, plays about their images, or seems to emanate from them. Finally, a fondness for the hues in the brighter and kookier nail polishes and lipsticks (say, frosty orchid) is not unusual. But for all this precious femininity of language, their conceptions can be quite tough-minded.

Larry Bell, for example, constructs

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glass, chrome-framed boxes upon which have been engraved gridded formations and patterns of mirrored areas. Looking through apertures to screens within the rectangular cavity, one's eye is snared and baffled by echoes and reflections of the external formations. It becomes impossible to fix or locate any single plane in space, to dissociate image from reality in an irregularly checkered labyrinth which has neither end nor beginning. Lost in all these silvered transparencies are glimpses of the spectator's own face, geometrically cut, as he moves in a futile attempt to orient himself. Bell's lapidary boxes are devices to fool the eye, which excuse themselves by their inordinate physical beauty. It is an expensive dilemma he creates, a chamber of reciprocal vacancies, whose formal aims, only superficially allied to fashionable optical painting, are strikingly mortised into implications of human impasse.

Equally remarkable is the ceramic polychrome sculpture of Ken Price, who presents a series of small-scaled melon and oval forms, all faintly mongoloid or misshapen, and camouflaged by lazily drifting amoeboid patches of nursery red, yellow or green. The original sources may be Arp and Miro, but magnified and utterly transformed. Here and there, their mat-lacquered surfaces are punctuated by biomorphic mouths or gills which reveal intestinal matter lubricated by a kind of sirupy varnish. As claustrophiliac as Bell, Price also manages to convert ornamental or decorative qualities into a metaphor—in this case zoological—that instills a certain fear. His mutational sculptures are as relaxing to live with, and as attractive to touch, as one of the more lethal anemones or jellyfish.

The "Sweaty" side of California art is typified by the older assemblagist Wallace Berman, who frequently made a kind of Buchenwald totem, Bruce Conner, who swaddles and strangles his cheaply jeweled charred images in nylon, and Ed Kienholz. The latter's work is all fur, ash, pseudo-excrement—stained, congealed and rotted. In their anger, and the sense they give of a world coming apart at the seams, Kienholz's brutish environments appear savagely out of step with the art around them. Particularly in their period reference—Kienholz incorporates beaten-up objects of the thirties and forties—do they contradict the strait-laced contemporaneity of, say, Bengston and

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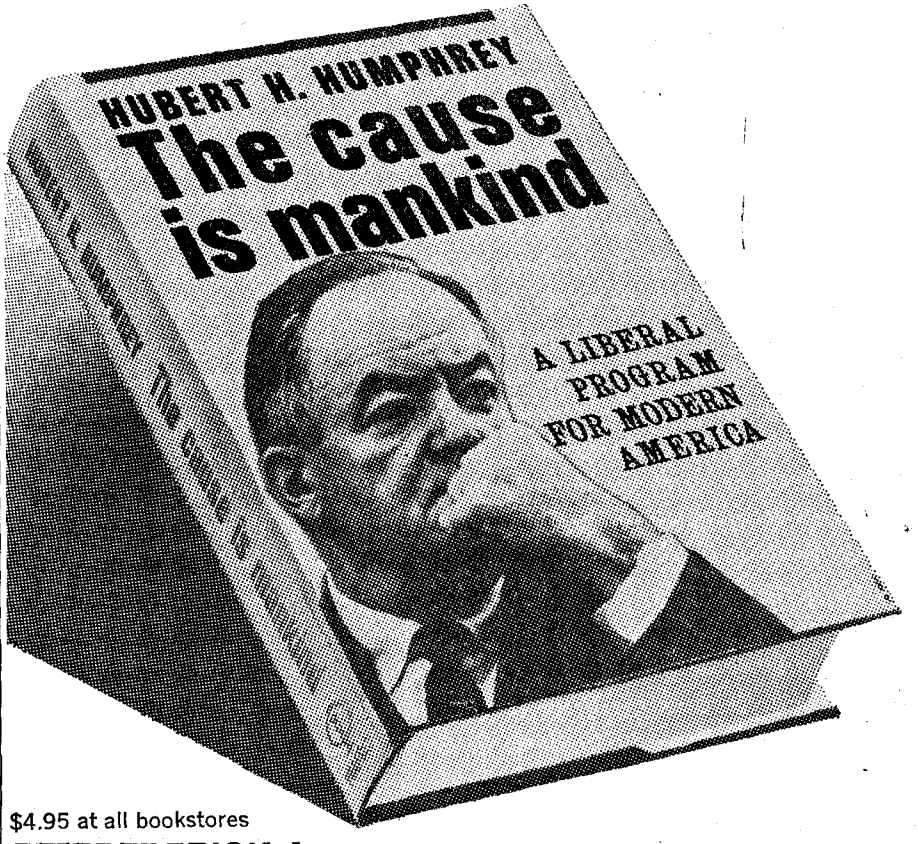

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Bell. But if his subjects are nostalgic, his commentary is not so much up-to-date as timeless. Kienholz specializes in paralyzing moments of horror, illustrated by his "Illegal Operation," in which the metal parts are splattered hemostats. By turns theatrical and figurative (exemplified by the title of his piece on Caryl Chessman, "The Psycho-Vendetta Case"), Kienholz's imagination zestfully proliferates revelations of bodily injury. Executions, abortions, childbirth, all these are conjured by a *guignol* sensibility whose greatest debt is to the Dadaism and Surrealism of the 1920s. When it is not torture he serves up, it may be the tableau which in his view leads to the torture, as in his latest work, "1938 Dodge": the American backseat fornication. Here, in a casketlike blue-flocked Dodge, amidst cigarette butts and beer cans, chicken-wire bodies coalesce, to materialize in solid form only where a hand reaches for panties. To open the door is to switch on a light—the mechanism recalls a refrigerator as much as a car—whose dim gleam husks the shell of the sadism and sexual disgust of California, and perhaps of American art as well.

For there can be little doubt that the mood of all these Los Angeles artists is screamingly erotic—and stifled. Kienholz shows the object of desire, but mortified almost beyond recognizability. His point of departure may be indignation at the wrongs of society, yet somewhere tripping up the rhetoric of his works is an embarrassing concupiscence. Conversely, the stimuli of his fellow artists are in an immediate kind of hormonal excitement, which is transferred to an adoration for the appointments of the new sexual objects: motorcycles and racing cars. These symbols of virility, which can produce thrills quickened by the fear of extinction, are paradoxically decked out in the spectrum of the boudoir. It is no accident that the sublimated art of a Frazier or a Bengston looks androgynous and narcissistic. Bengston lavishes a gorgeousness of aureoles and halations, sprayed like perfume, upon a field always centered by sergeant's chevrons—lonely insignia of manhood. Of course, this view of the machine in an erotic context is not unprecedented in modern art, since Duchamp evoked a whole mythology from it. (And perhaps his important exhibition in Pasadena last year was a significant cultural event in the area.) But for these young Americans, the theme is not a witty intellectual conceit, but an infatuation so much a part of their intimate lives that they cannot transmit it except through a curious repression.

The temperature of California art can best be taken by observing precisely how it indulges and inhibits sensuous pleasure. One thing certainly applies: be it bald or hairy, the work of art on the West Coast does not encourage the sense of touch. Tactilely, it is the most uncaressable stuff created, even when it wants to ingratiate itself. In truth, many of these young artists are romantics and sentimentalists, whose sense of vulnerability repels them from any style which would permit an open display of their commitments. Any spectator approaching new work in Los Angeles has to take their paradoxical nondemonstrative enthusiasm, or better still, deadpan fetishism, into account. An art which wallows in the luxuriance of such mechanistic techniques as enamel on plexiglass, automobile lacquer sprays and engraved mirrors, effecting a sheer sensuous affirmation of these materials, may not produce a tragic sense of life, but it does give a distinctly chilling impression.

In California, the past and the future get telescoped into the fantasies of a present which never knows itself. An absence of any vital tradition and the sense of living on the brink of developments, socially and technologically unknown, fosters a desperate prettiness, as if sensuous delight will compensate for the shapelessness of the human situation. Something of the sort must explain the fact that for the Los Angeles artists, "pretty" is as much a term of approval, as in New York it is one of condemnation. The contrast illuminates how slight is the moral weight and polemical voltage given to works of art in the West as compared with the East. Norman Mailer has some words on this as a cultural condition:

> *Not all the roots of American life are uprooted, but almost all, and the spirit of the supermarket, that homogenous extension of stainless surfaces and psychoanalyzed people, packaged commodities and ranch homes, interchangeable, geographically unrecognizable, that essence of the new postwar Super-America is found nowhere so perfectly as in Los Angeles's ubiquitous acres. One gets the impression that people come to Los Angeles in order to divorce themselves from the past, here to live or try to live in the rootless pleasure world of an adult child.*

Yet, for an *artist* to be an "adult child" is not necessarily a debility, nor in the least uncommon. Insofar as the tradition of modern art intermittently harks back to a condition of childlike seeing—to achieve an ever greater freshness of vision—the Los Angeles artists have good credentials. With them, rather, what is simulated is maturity, a veneer of decadent but transparent sophistication. The result

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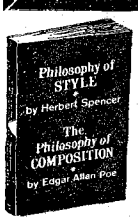

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is a disingenuous sweetness, fellow-traveling with the more absurd aspects of American life, but in the end displacing and compressing them into a new amalgam of pathological vitality.

As for California itself, it has become the most dynamic and resourceful artistic climate in this country outside New York. In Los Angeles alone there are about sixty-five galleries, two museums to be housed in new buildings devoted increasingly to twentieth-century and contemporary art, and a cadre of collectors furnishing an enlightened patronage hitherto lacking in the area. The yeast for most of this ferment is the young magazine *Artforum*, the only organ which has taken upon itself—although it has far from reached—a responsible critical account of the West Coast *avant-garde*. Substantially, this environment is not older than three years.

Yet it would be erroneous to speak of a "School of Los Angeles." In the sense that they were defined as coherent urban traditions, "schools" no longer exist. Besides, during the fifties, art in California was synonymous with "Bay Area Figuration," a corpulent, beefsteak kind of Abstract Expressionism that turned profitlessly to the representational. Although in and around San Francisco it produced talents as substantial as Richard Diebenkorn, Frank Lobdell, Hassell Smith and the sculptor Peter Voulkos, it was the tail end of a movement which had already lost its momentum years before in New York. Still mostly indifferent to its artists, and weak as a market, San Francisco cannot be said to equal the physical apparatus or the hipness of Los Angeles. But it has nevertheless managed to give the most ironic edge to the whole status of West Coast art in the work of 28-year-old sculptor Robert Hudson.

The most salient thing about Hudson is that he parallels the two areas of his Los Angeles colleagues, but manipulates them so highhandedly and irreverently that they cancel each other out. His pieces resemble a kind of mad plumbing, gesturing animistically in polychromed steel and iron. Tubes, flaps, bulbs, meshes and strainers, bent and buckled, limp or erect, and colored in screeching yellows, blacks and reds, perform a grotesque pirouette. Depicted upon these mimetic shapes, especially those that have sexual implications, are lightning bolts and checkered highway signs. Spatially, it is a disorderly, irrepressible sculpture, but pictorially, it is extremely precise and controlled. Each episode or pocket of his compositions projects a calculated burst of irrationality, corny without being childish, or refined without being precious. Scattered over his imagery are illusionistic bits of drawing, imitating a projection or a shadow. His implausibility mocks the, by contrast, sudden calmness and restraint of the artists to the south. At the same time, his is the least romantic and the most balanced sensibility among them.

An erotic and dehumanizing malaise ultimately haunts, and yet generates, great energy among young California artists. Above all, the scope of their work gives the present situation in American art an anxious alternative. In the aesthetic life of this country, they are like a glandular disturbance. But if so, it is of such a nature as to make the observer more fully realize the nature of all creative moments.

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LATERNA MAGIKA

Laterna Magika is a Czechoslovakian event at Carnegie Hall. Upon concluding its limited engagement in New York, it will tour cities in the United States with theatres big enough to handle it. Expensively advertised as a "unique" melding of music, theatre, dance, motion pictures and "sheer" poetry, it was developed in Prague "for millions of dollars" and features thirty "live" Czechoslovakian actors, singers and dancers performing a *fin de siècle* French opera surrounded by three movie screens of different sizes all going at once. People began to leave after fifteen minutes. The advertising boys had folksily implied that the last iron curtain, once lifted, revealed Cinerama playing something like *How the East Was Won*. Most of the audience hadn't expected to spend two-thirds of the evening swamped with Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*. Worldly tales, weary music, but for those who stayed there were electrifying things to see. The film was the thing.

Jan Stallich is credited as director of photography. His work is more memorable than the mechanical wizardry with which it is presented and,

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shown in a loft, would have been as dazzling. The screens riot with imaginative, painterly compositions. Color weaves dramatize the three nineteenth-century spiritual landscapes in which Hoffmann's adventures take place, more successfully than Offenbach's score. Brittle creams and orchid hues surface in the Paris salon; gloomy and hysterical close-ups characterize the German episode, and finally, the naked, surreal autism of Venice peddling flesh tones worthy of Rubens. (There is none of that technicolor pallor which makes all the women look like Barbie Dolls and the men Rock Hudson ruddy.) Throughout, the film exhibits the high technical gloss which is supposed to be Hollywood's most signal accomplishment.

The mechanical devices are not just gimmicks. The three screens present entirely different images or else different perspectives on the same scene. Three ways of looking at a baritone is a banal example, but the process was exhilarating when the audience was maneuvered through the Venetian canals, for instance, badgered on three sides by heaving, opulent courtesans plucking wild harps, beckoning and gurgling in the magic blue air. That was as lush a moment as any I've experienced in a decadent Western theatre.

Because the screens are not joined, artifice is emphasized with the usual paradoxical result: a measure of artificiality sponsors suspension of disbelief rather than inhibits it. Watching *Cinerama* and other earnest Hollywood attempts to approximate three-dimensional realities, you must hoard a lack of involvement in self-defense. The California people are always trying to make it dizzy for you on roller coasters, or drop you among stampeding buffaloes; applauding their expertise, one also applauds the fact that none of it is really happening to anyone but the camera man.

Laterna Magika poses other obvious problems. When the dramatic has to take precedence over the decorative, the effect can be walleyed. The action whips from screen to screen and if you're hellbent to follow the plot, you could break your neck. These hazards are minimized by having "live" actors carry much of the narrative. They'd have been better advised to stay in the wings.

Singers can't compete with their own voices stereophonically magnified, and actors are hopelessly upstaged by their own faces purified of blemishes on celluloid 20 feet tall. The unsettling thing is that one pities, and then gradually entertains a cold, totalitarian dislike for the poor forked dwarfs sweating and bellowing so thinly under the harsh lights. Why don't they return to that fluid medium where the pitch is always perfect and the slightest movement graceful and effective?

Hoffmann, played by Vladimir Krejcik, had to bear the main burden of the war between technology and the rest of us. He was brave and has a fine voice, but wandering around talking to the screens he began to resemble a deranged and insubordinate usher who, concluding he should be in the movies himself, had taken the shortest route to get there. The integration of flesh and film must always work to the disadvantage of the merely mortal.

Laterna Magika represents a new "fusion" of forms only if the combination of sight and sound can be considered novel. It is primarily a technological refinement with limited dramatic possibilities. Stories can only be mauled by such a process, including opera which is admittedly the form best suited to such exploitation because it is prone to be histrionic, spectacular and static. But music is the dramatic fuse in opera, and even Mozart would be servant to the visual excitements in *Laterna Magika*.

On the other hand there is a whole world to photograph. When you don't have to concentrate on anything specific, the skillful optical engineering of the screens gives the illusion of seeing three times as much magnificent photography as one would see in an ordinary theatre. I would pay fancy Carnegie Hall prices to watch the ceiling in the Sistine Chapel or the World Series filtered through such a process, so long as there were no Popes or other live umpires included on stage, and Jan Stallich was credited with taking the pictures.

The final section of the program is billed as "a *divertissement*." The live Czechs have a much better time of it here, dancing, singing and playing the violin with the unexpected jazzy insouciance of Ed Sullivan regulars. Mechanical marvels still abound. Pavel Vesely romps with a representation of a ballerina pirouetting prettily on a round portable screen he twirls over his head like a wafer. Pavel Vesely roller skates across the stage, picks up speed and sails straight through the streets of Prague at 50 miles an hour, holding his own with the cops, the traffic and the damned movie projectors. The results are charming and unambiguous because the spirit is sheer vaudeville, the only real vaudeville left in the vast technocracy which extends from Moscow to Los Angeles. The aim is to awe, and in that venture men and machines have cooperated successfully before. Machines seem to be doing most of the work, but at least they're still taking our picture.

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Crossword Puzzle No. 1069

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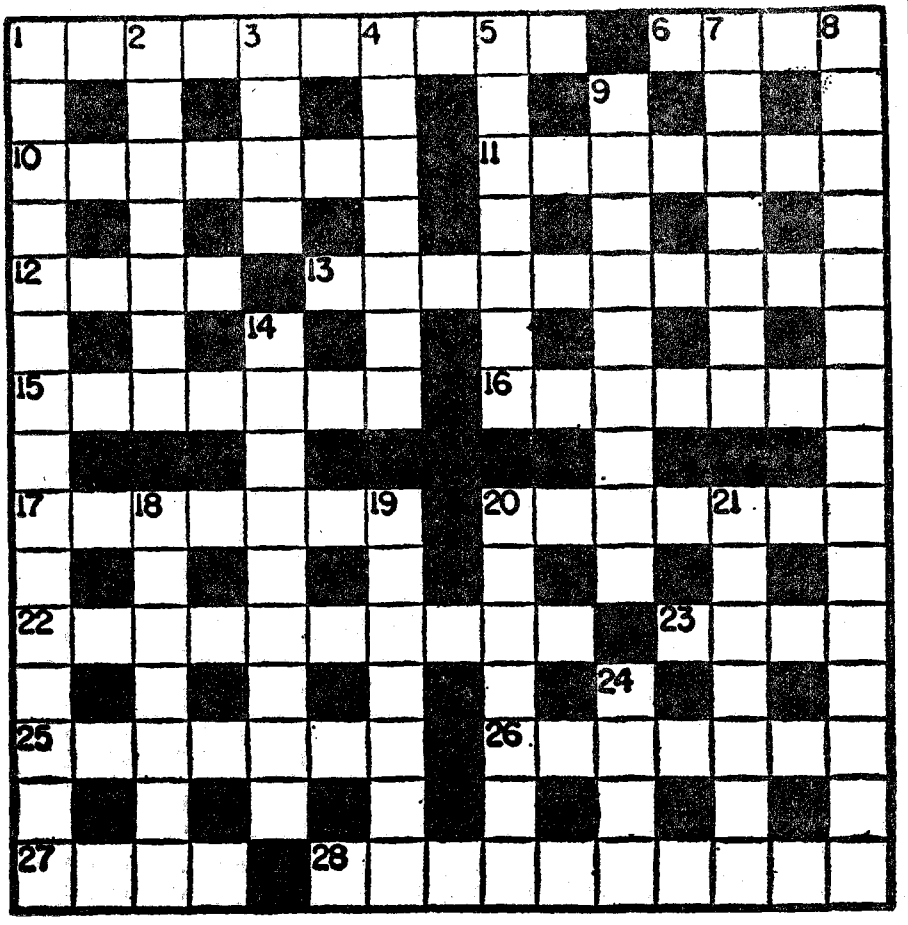

ACROSS:

1 General indication of something reputedly having no turning. (10)
6 A place to put flowers, or the position of the rest. (4)
10 Mr. A, with the full sort of title associated with Diana. (7)
11 There's a lot about a carriage which is like a boat. (7)
12 It might be with regard to a broken rein. (2, 2)
13 Air-raid wardens? How stupid! (10)
15 and 24 down Where cooks work to wash a primitive propeller. (6, 5)
16 You probably can't stand to do it. (3, 4)
17 Stop the music! (7)
20 Mr. Franklin meets the god of war on the Ganges. (7)
22 Visionary. (10)
23 Dish found in Holland. (4)
25 At close inspection might reveal milk sugar. (7)
26 Gaius and Tiberius. (7)
27 The framework of the band. (4)
28 He improved the transportation of fowl, in relative surroundings. (10)

DOWN:

1 A leash and a bridle, for example? They might head the column. (7, 8)
2 It might take away the effect of sharpness. (7)
3 Might it be well to add quietly? (4)
4 Makes an illegal stock transfer, possibly. (7)
5 The consequences of what people may own. (7)
7 Well done! It's about time for boasting! (7)
8 Not a tiring room — just where something might be bound up near the front. (8, 7)
9 Resist — Custer might be associated. (9)
14 Prize animal? It's possibly a relief. (9)
18 Strips of money? (7)
19 Beginning to develop an uprising on the track. (7)
20 Raise, or raise a subject. (5, 2)
21 They're out of their habitual environment. (7)
24 See 15 across

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1068

ACROSS: 1 Night blindness; 8 Trotting race; 10 Reexamined; 11 Snub; 13 Legged; 14 Left face; 16 Reopened; 19 Does; 20 Micronesia; 22 Admits defeat; 23 Unpremeditated. DOWN: 1 Natural Bridges; 2 and 17 Goosey Goosey Gander; 3 Tete-a-tetes; 4 Lentil; 5 Norsemen; 6 Neck; 7 Double-breasted; 9 Incandescent; 12 Attainment; 15 Delirium; 18 Prised; 21 Oder.

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